PLAYABLE DEMOS! 21 NEW PS3 GAMES!



PlayStation_®C

PS2 & PS3!

Hilil:[1]

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PS3 EXCLUSIVE!

FIRST LOOK AT THE KILLER APP FOR PS3 LAUNCH!

Aussie release for the RPG blockbuster confirmed!

GRAND THEFT AUTO PS2 Review & Playguide!

TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8 The Birdman flies

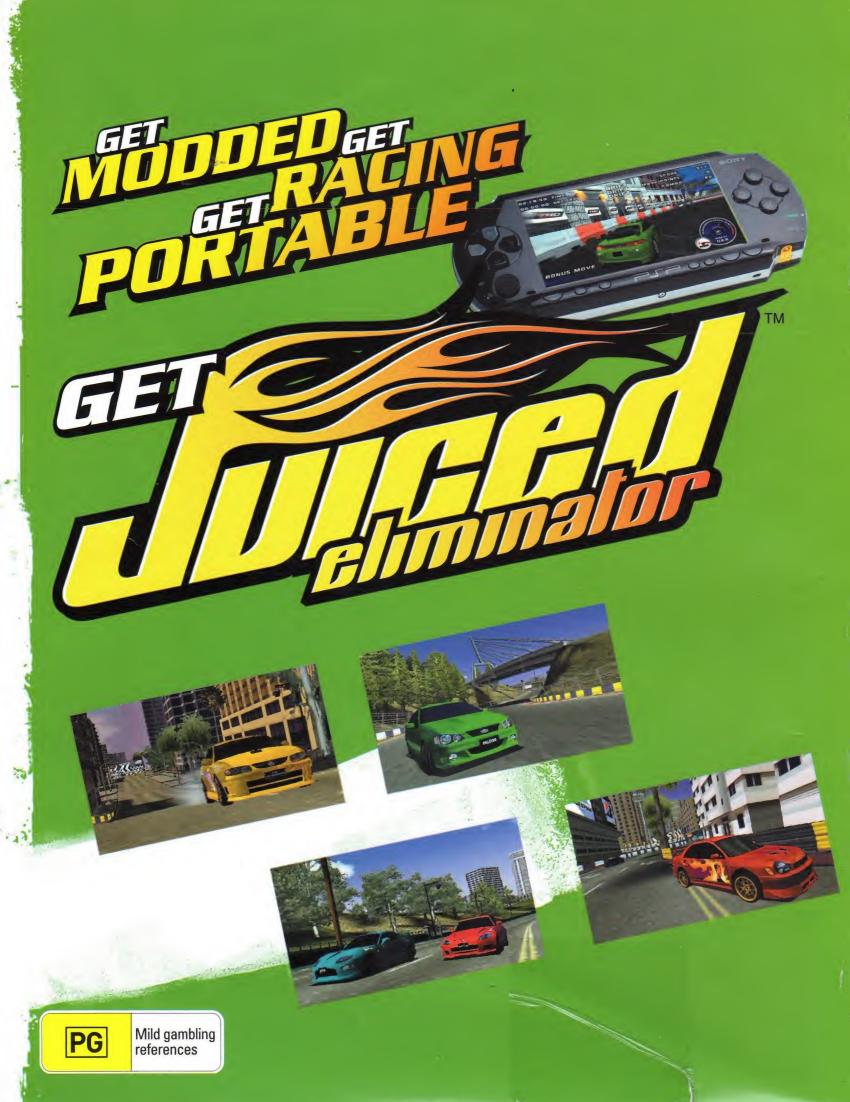
higher than ever!

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Hideo Kojima's only Aussie interview!

ISSUE 56 AUGUST 2006 AUS \$14.95 NZ \$16.95 (INC.GST)





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Contents







Metal Gear Solid 4
Hideo dishes the dirt on Solid
Snake's latest mission!



Kingdom Hearts II
Disney and Square reunite for one more bash!



64 GTA: Liberty City Stories
Head back to Liberty City for one last spin on your PS2!



Assassin's Creed
Everything you need to know about the PS3's hottest title!



Need for Speed Carbon Fasten your seatbelts as NFS puts it into top gear for PS3!



Tony Hawk's Project 8
See the Birdman fly to dizzying new heights on PS3!









www.codemasters.com/micromachines







NINTENDO DS.



PlayStation₈2



Codemasters (h)

Contents



PREVIEWS

- 24 KINGDOM HEARTS II New worlds! New characters!
- 26 JUSTICE LEAGUE HEROES
 The DC stars unite for an epic battle!
- 27 SOCOM: CA

 First info on the SEALs' next mission!
- 27 TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED

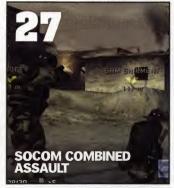
 We take Atari's new racer for a spin!
- 28 JUST CAUSE... AND MORE Everything your PS2 needs until PS3!

REVIEWS

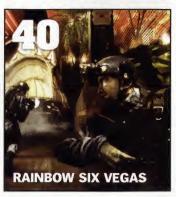
- 64 GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES
- **67 OPERATION WINBACK 2**
- 68 AFL PREMIERSHIP 2006
- 70 FORBIDDEN SIREN 2
- 71 CARS
- **72 MICRO MACHINES V4**
- 73 THE DA VINCI CODE
- ... AND MORE!

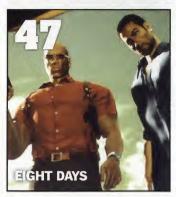






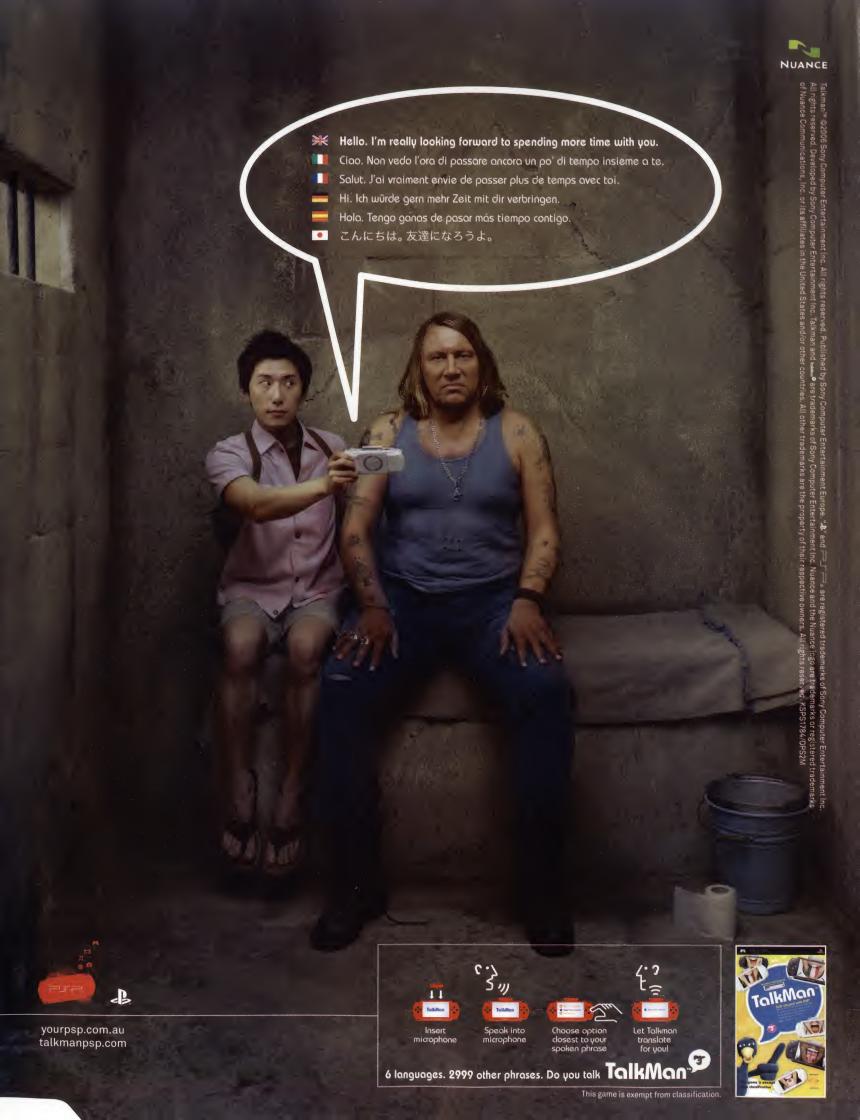






REGULARS

- **8 EDITOR'S LETTER**
- 10 LOADING...
- 20 FEEDBACK
- 24 PRE-PLAY
- 38 PS3-PLAY
- 64 PLAY-TEST
- **76 DVD REVIEWS**
- **78 SUBSCRIPTIONS**
- **80 GAMESTATION**
- 82 ON THE DVD
- 84 RE-BOOT
- 88 RE-PLAY
- 90 CHEATS
- 91 NEXT ISSUE
- 92 PSP-PLAY



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Shout outs :: Joel "Blonde Wiggle" Graham :: Cuervo Tequila :: Naked women everywhere :: Congratulations to Hyomee on her promotioni

DERWENT A HOWARD



DITOR'S LETT

ow good is Hitman: Blood Money? Despite my wife's constant protests I've done nothing but play it for the last two weeks. She hasn't been this disappointed in me since she found me passed out half-way up the front steps with

"Worst lay I've ever had! - Paul's sister" written across my forehead In fat magic marker. No wonder that smart arse taxi driver said he couldn't take my money.

Ah Hitman, we've had so many good times together. The poison we slipped into the recovering alcoholic mafia Don's hidden bottle of whisky; the paedophile we iced by shooting his boyfriend then triggering a mini explosive charge that dropped a half-tonne chandelier on his head as he rushed to his recently deceased life-partner's side; and who could forget the dominatrix we whacked by adjusting the angle of a couple of the flame jets before her impressive pyrotechnic stage show? She sure lit up the room,

Being an assassin for hire is not without its setbacks. My unwalked dogs have made Swiss cheese out of my backyard, I've been living off potato chips since my wife suspended the kitchen's couch service and my local GP's refused to keep supplying me with doctor's certificates for my sickies (which is ironic because I've just started developing atrophy in my legs) but I'll be dammed if I'm giving up before I get Slient Assassin ratings on every last mission. I've come too far to give up now.

NARAYAN PATTISON

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?



TRISTAN OGILVIE

I took a week off to relax and meditate on my role within the cosmos. Not really, I just drank a lot of beer and built a small fort out of the empties. The walls of Fort Tooheys are still standing tall in my lounge room, surrounded by a moat of spllt salsa dip. Eww.



LUKE REILLY

After three months of hassle I finally got my bond back for the house I moved out of. Who knew cars left tiny oll stains In garages? But I can't blow it all - I need to blow it later on a wedding. No, I didn't mean it like that, babe (oops, I think I blew it).



PHILLIP JORGE

I went to a mate's bachelor party that didn't have any strippers. Instead everyone brought their girlfriends. So I decided to provide the action and stripped down to my Solid Snake boxers. What? Don't pretend you wouldn't do the same thing.



PAUL FREW

I got shot down by four seperate women this month. I don't get it, I mought all women wanted a guy with a sense of humour? Don't they read OPS2? I'm the biggest joke In this magazinel So come on ladies, I'm waiting to take



L 136 1

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With an Official PlayStation 2 Magazine subscription you can get 12 Issues delivered directly to your door for just \$8.35* each. That's a MASSIVE saving of 44% off the regular cover pricel Turn to page 78 for all the details...

language

live the dream.

singstargame.com



Exclusive to

PlayStation_®2

With SingStar® Rocks! you don't need to be on a sell-out world tour to live the rock 'n' roll dream. Just get some mates around, plug the mics in and let rip. With original international rock tracks from Blur to Australian rock tracks from bands like Powderfinger, Jet, and Killing Heidi, it won't take long to sort out the headliners from the headbangers. (Smashing up hotel rooms afterwards is optional.)

PG Mild coarse











HUBBY RAIN

When it rains, it pours

here were plenty of PS3related surprises at E3 in Los Angeles, and the incredibly realistic trailer for Heavy Rain, from French developer Quantic Dream, was one of them.

The initial presentation we caught a glimpse of at E3 revealed very little about the mysterious upcoming title but it showcased the incredible amount of detail that will be going into Heavy Rain's facial animation system. As the woman in the demo spoke every muscle in her face moved naturally. The sheen on her eyes, the way her forehead would crease when she raised her brow, even the way her tongue

moved as she enunciated each word was uncannily realistic.

Fortunately a number of interesting murmurs have emerged in the wake of E3 that fill in some of the many blanks left after its provoking E3 appearance.

Surprising though it may seem, Quantic Dream spent less than three months putting the demo together from scratch, which included everything from developing the PS3 engine, writing the script, staging auditions to find a suitable actress, sorting out some motioncapture techniques and doing some quick research and development for recreating her tongue and hair.

Sony took note of the demo and asked if Quantic Dream would run it at E3 to illustrate the powerhouse potential of the PS3 to recreate believable, virtual actors. However, the Heavy Rain demo shown at E3 was a technical demo created in a limited amount of time. It's hard to believe, but the team at Quantic Dream expects the final quality of its characters will be even better!

With this kind of detail, surely we won't be seeing too many characters at once, right? Wrong. Quantic Dream is planning to have plenty of populated environments in the game with potentially massive crowds. All characters will boast the same astonishing level of detail, but a number of savvy programming techniques will be utilised to focus resources on what the player will actually be able to see.

As for the story, it's still anyone's guess. We do know Heavy Rain won't be a sequel to Quantic Dream's last title, Fahrenheit, but the developer is keeping mum on the details at this point. All we know is that Heavy Rain will be a mature, film-noir style thriller and that its set to feature multiple playable characters.

The bad news? Don't expect to reach for your umbrella before Spring 2008. 🕹 LR

Uncovering the latest PS2 news every month



WINNERS

Jarhead DVDs: D Walker, L Kilkelly, C Crawley, B Lawson, M Benjamin. Lord of War DVDs: R Samuels, T Donaghue, P Lincoln, S Caruana, Y Basheer. SanDisk 512mb Memory Sticks: S Williams, A Reeves, S Collins, F Siebert. Family Guy Season 4 DVDs: D Stanton, A Coenraads, K Brundrett, J Fox, V Howard, B Pletersen, N Johnson, F Salvaggio, R Wilmont and D Skogen.

CRANK YANKING

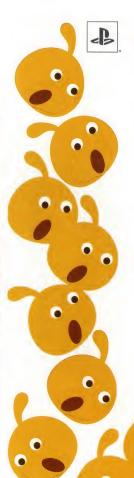
If you've been surfing the Internet's local beaches recently you might have stumbled across the new Aussie website cranktv. com.au. It's packed with twominute TV episode-style segments about what's hot on the street, in the cinema and in the home. If you haven't seen it yet you've got a good reason to now because their new Games Guru segment features OPS2's own Naz overacting his way through a bunch of PSP videos. Download it getting a good laugh you'll also have a chance to win a PSP!

THAT'S CRAZY!

Sony has registered a bizarre new patent with the US patent office. The patent is for "[a]n electrorheological fluid device and an electronic apparatus, which realise various hardness or tension in a portion of the device or apparatus to which a human body touches, enabling application to a product that needs to have portability." A controller that goes hard or flaccid in your hands? Sounds pretty dirty to us.

STILL GOING

The PS2 price slash has given a massive boost to the sales of the all-conquering console. According to GfK sales data PS2 sales rose dramatically after the drop below \$200, eclipsing sales of the new Xbox 360 by a huge margin.



PS2 // PSP

THRILLER!

Roll up, roll up!

tari has announced its plans to distribute Frontier Developments Ltd.'s *Thrillville* on PS2 and PSP just in time for Christmas 2006.

Built specifically for the console audience, *Thrillville* Is a theme park-based game that aims to trounce all past theme park games with an exhaustive list of killer features.

Assuming the role of a young amusement park owner you'll have all manner of rides, attractions and stalls at your fingertips across five different parks.

You won't just be able to build the parks though; you'll be able to experience them for yourselves. Once you've finished your puke-inducing coaster of death you'll be able to head into your park as a playable character and ride it. While you're there you'll be able to chat to patrons, flirt with single mums and partake in a bunch of mini-games. Better yet, Thrillville's party games will support up to four players.

Think PSone's *Theme Park World* as you always wanted it. **LR**







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ROCK ON!

The future of Guitar Hero

n an interview with next-gen.biz, president and cofounder of *Guitar Hero* publisher RedOctane Kai Huang has dropped a few hints regarding the future of the franchise. Huang says that new *Hero* titles featuring other instruments are very likely, and quite possibly waiting in the wings as we speak.

"The next logical step within this category is to make other music instrument-based games," said Huang. "What most people have been asking for and would want next are products that we're likely already working on."

Huang pointed out that RedOctane would also continue to build on the *Guitar Hero* phenomenon. *Guitar Hero II*, slated for a release later this year, will be the first step but there's chatter of doing additional guitars too – different colours, models and possibly higher-end models that more closely resemble real guitars.

Turning to next-gen possibilities, Huang says online will be a huge component of what RedOctane is planning.

"Whether that's downloading new music or characters or skins or online play features, those are the things that are really going to be the major changes for next-gen," said Huang.

In other words - don't fret, there's more axe-grinding to come. - LR







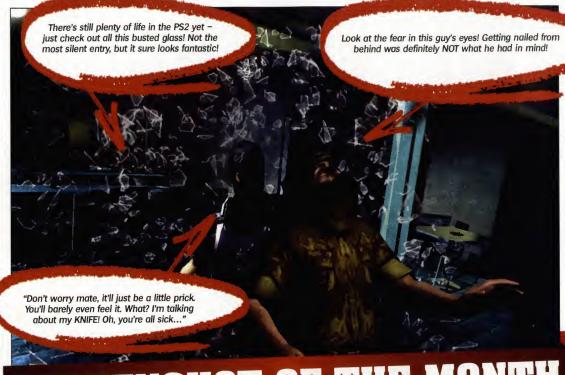
he sheer power of the PS3
will mean things we never
thought possible will become
reality. Games themselves will not only
look more realistic, they'll play more
realistically. As the gap between games
and reality narrows we need to ask
ourselves an important question.
How far do we push the envelope?
Nobody is questioning the validity of
games as a credible medium that
appeals to a wide range of audiences,
but I wonder how much realism
gamers will take.

Take Saving Private Ryan, for Instance. The harrowing battles in that flick are among the most brutal ever depicted. Their impact is devastating. It's not like watching a horny teenager get sliced in twain in some B-grade horror movie. This is how it went down. But in the end, a film is a passive experience. You're just watching it happen. You're not causing it. But what if you were? What if, down the track, you're playing a WWII shooter that pulls NO punches? Do you want to walk past a corpse with a caved in face and blood, brain and bone fragments leaking out onto the soil? Do you want to be compelled to pump a bullet into a mortally wounded soldier whose clutching his intestines in his hands and screaming for his mother at the top of his lungs? Sure, it would be justified by context, and many developers believe authenticity is paramount, but that sort of heavy-duty

I'm just here to have fun.

violence could be a real downer.

Jessica Greene, Games Journalist



SCREENSHOT OF THE MONTH

Splinter Cell: Double Agent - behold the power of PS2!

P52

WINNING IS EVERYTHING

Operation Win Winback!

t's been a long time between drinks for this sequel, but *Operation Winback 2: Project Poseidon* is finally hitting shelves. Thanks to THQ we've got 10 copies to give away to 10 lucky readers. But you know the drill – we're not going to post these out to the first few saps we pluck out of the White Pages, you're going to need to send in an entry. All you need to do is answer the question below, follow the entry instructions on page 15 and mark your entry 'Winback 2 giveaway'.

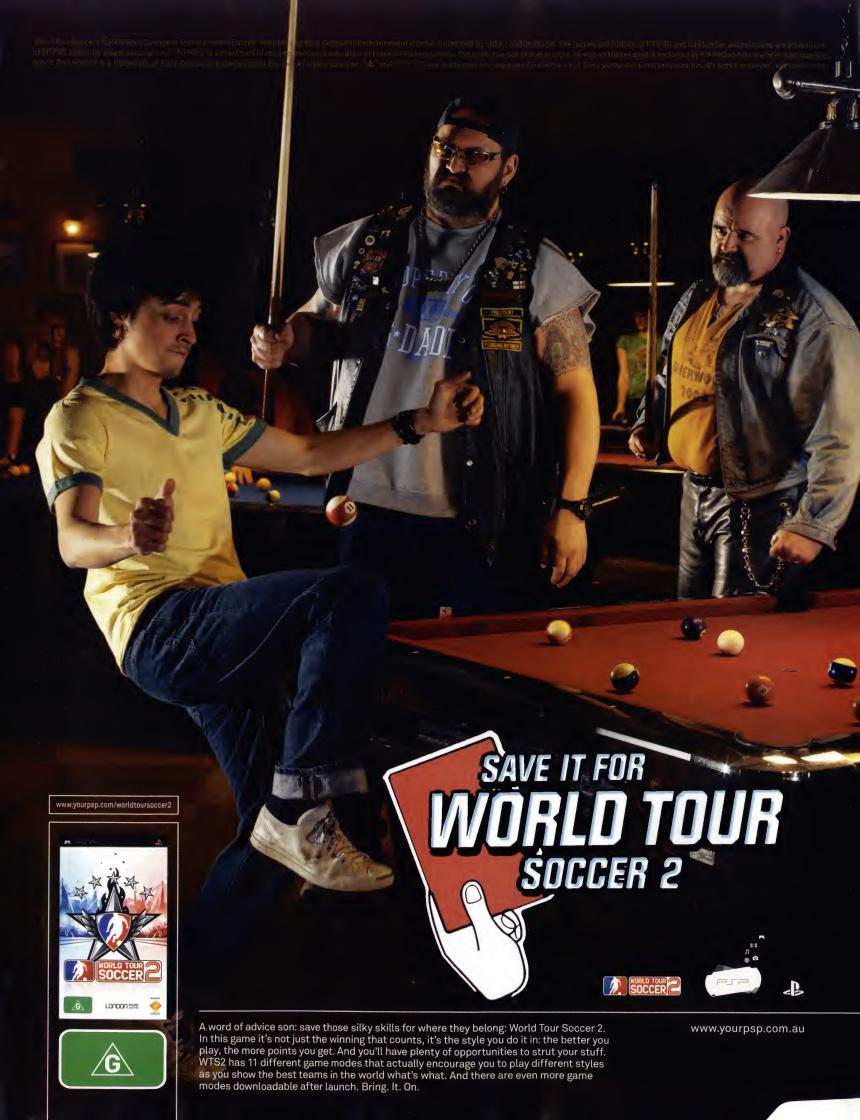
Q: What was Poseidon the god of?

- a) Rock
- b) The sea
- c) Lingerie
- d) Getting down





PlayStation_®2





GUITAR HERO SPIN-OFFS FROM HELL

Guitar Hero: Billy Ray Cyrus Signature Edition

Contains 30 different versions of 'Achy Breaky Heart' by Billy Ray, plus 15 covers by his siblings and cousins, some of who are the same people. Each copy is actually hand signed by Billy Ray (the number beside his autograph is his phone number).

Trumpet Hero

"Do you want to blow on my peripheral?" Doesn't work too well with the ladles. "Could you adjust my spit valve?" Works even less.

Guitar Hero: Australian Idol Edition Play *Guitar Hero* while Shannon Noll bleats his way through 'What About

Me?' What about shutting the hell up?

Cello Hero

"Just grip the bow and stroke it from side to side." We can see a lot of people getting punched over this one.

Guitar Hero for Kids

Includes The Wiggles, HI-5 and that annoying Peter Combe song about washing your face with orange juice that kids have been singing for 20 years now.

Ukelele Hero

Sounded funny until we realised we didn't have anything to say about it.

Guitar Hero: Christian Rock

We have it on good authority Jesus prefers Hendrix to Creed (okay, we made that up, but Creed blow).

Flute Hero

This one time, at band camp...

Guitar Hero: Nickelback

Packs nothing but Nickelback. Only uses the green fret button.

Lagerphone Hero

Bash a stick covered in stubble lids on the ground In time to some music. Includes the ability to customise your Lagerphone by adding your own stubble lids. As if we needed an excuse to drink beer...













PS2

OUTSTANDING

Another gong for Resi 4

he bloody awesome Resident Evil 4 has been an OPS2 favourite since its 2005 release – we still love it.

The critically acclaimed splatter-fest recently received the prestigious Yellow Pencil at The D&AD Global Awards 2006. The awards recognize the very best in design, advertising and creative communication

around the world. 2006 marks the first time videogames have been acknowledged with their own category.

"The D&AD awards celebrate

innovation and creativity across many different media and we are really pleased to now include videogames," said D&AD President Dick Powell. "With Resident Evil 4 Capcom has certainly set a high standard for future nominees." • LR

P52

GET THE DRIFT?

D1 slides onto PS2

apanese developer Yuke's, most famous for its *SmackDown!* wrestling series, has announced a new title for PS2 that doesn't involve sweaty men grappling with each other, but grappling with steering wheels instead. *D1 Grand Prix*, based on the world class drifting championship, will be the Yuke's malden racing game.

D1 Grand Prix will boast all the official D1 rules, racers and tracks and a garage full of sweet rides including the Pontiac GTO, the Monaro in Yankee clothing.

A slick commentary engine will also allow you to hear what the three judges think about your driving skills in real-time as you get sideways around each circuit.

A local release is yet to be confirmed, but you'll know as soon as we do. **LR**

CINEMA

FOOTY FEVER

Score a Footy Legends prize pack!

hanks to Icon Film Distribution we've got five Footy Legends prize packs to give away. Each one includes The Footy Show – Three of the Best DVD set, a Steeden ball, an Asics training shirt and a double pass to see Footy Legends when it hits cinemas.

Set in Sydney's western suburbs, Footy Legends is the story of Luc Vu, a young Vietnamese-Australian man who loves his footy. With welfare authorities threatening to take away his little sister, Luc re-unites his old high school footy team to win a comp that could change their lives.

If you want to win, take a punt and answer to following question. Mark your entries 'Footy Legends' giveaway and follow the entry instructions on page 15. Keep in mind, Footy Legends opens on August 3 so get those entries in quick smart!

Q: In what year was the first Rugby League State of Origin held?







PS3: Clint Eastwood, Lawrence Fishburne and Gene Hackman are lending their voices and likeness to the upcoming Dirty Harry, due to release in 2007.

SHOUT IT OUT LOUD

More karaoke craziness from SingStar

f SingStar Rocks! wasn't exactly your bag, maybe the oestrogeninfused SingStar Anthems will tickle your fancy.

As long as we're being honest here, we can't say the prospect of walling to Cher and Whitney Houston is really that enticing. Yes, the Pussycat Dolls are sexy – but we'd rather pull our bottom lips over our heads and swallow than actually listen to any of their music. That said, in the spirit of objective journalism we did take a quick poll of the women in our lives and found out the diva-packed SingStar Anthems is tailor made for chicks.

The sixth game in the series, we imagine you'll understand the ins and outs of the popular franchise by now so we won't bore you with too many details. In the meantime, feel free to peruse a tracklist that'd put Priscilla Queen of the Desert to shame. LR





TRACKLIST

Somebody

Girl Aloud - Biology

Charlotte Church - Crazy Chick

Queen - Radio Ga Ga Bonnie Tyler - Total Eclipse of the Heart Take That feat. Lulu - Relight My Fire Cher - If I Could Turn Back Time Steps - Deeper Shade of Blue Dead or Alive - You Spin Me Round (Like A Record) Candi Station - Young Hearts Run Free Gloria Gaynor - I Will Survive Bananarama - I Heard A Rumour Pussycat Dolls - Don't Cha Leann Rimes - Can't Fight the Moonlight Donner Summer - I Feel Love Bucks Fizz - Making Your Mind Up The Weather Girls - It's Raining Men Ultra - Nate Free Scissor Sisters - Laura Kim Wilde - Kids in America Whitney Houston - I Wanna Dance With







BUZZI: THE BIG QUIZ (BUNDLE) slides into third, proving Jason Donovan has what it takes to keep the punters coming back for more. That, or he's

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	DISTRIBUTOR
	SingStar Rocks! (Bundle)	Party	Sony
5	Gultar Hero	Rock God Sim	Activision
6	Buzzl: The Big Quiz (Game Only)	Party	Sony
Z	Need for Speed Most Wanted	Racing	EA
8	Tourist Trophy	Racing	Sony
9	Hitman: Blood Money	Action	Atarl
10	FIFA 2006	Sports	EA

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

	-	v	
л	JI		

America's Army Rise of a Soldier	Action	Ubisoft
Black Buccaneer	Action	Atari
Jaws: Unleashed	Action	THQ
Micro Machines v4	Racing	Atari
Reservoir Dogs	Action	Atari
AUGUST		

Madden NFL 07	Sports	EA
Super Monkey Ball Adventure		THQ
CERTIMIER		

SEPTEMBER		
Ace Combat Zero: The Belkan War	Flight	Sony
Just Cause	Action	Atari
Justice League Heroes	Adventure	Atari
Kingdom Hearts II	RPG	Ubisoft
Splinter Cell Double Agent	Action	Ubisoft
Sulkoden 5	RPG	Atari

OCTOBER		
FlatOut 2	Racing	Red
Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistance	Action	Ata

NOTENBER				
Arthur and the Minimoys	Adventure	Atari		
Pro Evolution Soccer 6	Sports	Atari		
Superman Returns	Action	EA		

TBC

TBC		
Battlestations: Midway	Strategy	Atari
	Adventure	Take 2
Dance Factory	Party	Atari
Destroy Ali Humans! 2	Adventure	THQ
Dirge of Cerebus: Final Fantasy VII	Action	TBC
Family Guy	Adventure	Take 2
Final Fantasy XII	RPG	TBC
Ghost Rider	Action	Take 2
God of War II	Action	Sony
Guitar Hero II	Party	Activision
LEGO Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy	Action	Activision
Marvel: Ultimate Alliance	RPG	Activision
Mortal Kombat: Armageddon	Fighting	Red-Ant
Painkiller: Hell Wars	Action	QVS
Rainbow Six Critical Hour	Action	Ubisoft
Scarface: The World is Yours	Action	Vivendi
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Sports	Activision
Yakuza	Action	THQ







P52

GT4 ONLINE TESTED

Is Gran Turismo back online?



he online component of GT4 may have been pruned before its release in 2005, but an online version to be released at a later date was never ruled out. Why bring it up now? Well, an online-enabled version of GT4 has just made its way into the hands of 5000 Japanese beta testers.

it needs to be noted that the online version of GT4 hasn't actually been announced as an official product. Despite rumours of an online GT4 earlier this year, at this point the beta-test version is being viewed as a testing tool (though it may end up being released on PS2 at some stage).

The online GT4 is virtually identical to the offline version aside from an online option featuring races and private chat rooms.

The race options come in two forms - Quick Race, a pre-set race event with pre-set cars, and Tuned Car Race, basically the same, although you can pick one of your own cars.

The beta test is running until August 31. 4 LR



LocoRoco.com





GET A VENDETTA

Win some Wachowski magic!

he Wachowski brothers are back from their two Matrix tragedies with V for Vendetta, a story about a young girl who is rescued by a masked vigilante known as V. What follows is the two becoming involved in the political struggle that's plaguing the totalitarian society with the only tools of debate being weapons of mass destruction. Thanks to Warner Bros., we've got five copies of V for Vendetta to give away. To score yourself a copy simply answer the following question, mark your entry as 'V for Vendetta giveaway' and see page 15 for details.

Q: Who is the actor behind the mask in V for Vendetta?





Daisuke Uchiyama, chief producer at Namco Bandai, has confirmed that Soul Calibur IV is in the pipeline. When it's coming, and to what consoles, is still unclear.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR / MARTIN DUBERU

DEVELOPER DIARY

Continuing with our ongoing series of interviews, this month OPS2 chats to Martin Dubeau, artistic director on Splinter Cell Double Agent





OPS2: Are videogames a hobby that came your work?

MD: Indeed, videogames have always been a passion for me, which made me want to add my own vision. In fact, as far as I'm concerned, this job is by far more of a passion than a profession.

OPS2: What is your educational background? What degrees to you commend for this position?

MD: I have a background as a graphic designer. I think that you need to have at least an education or even professional experiences that help you to learn the basic rules of graphic design. A strong sense of observation and Imagination are pluses which, as far as I'm concerned, are essential in this profession.

OPS2: How is an artistic director or level artist recruited? Based on what

MD: It is, above all, a matter of confidence between the DA and the producer. Of course, experience on previous games created, responsibilities, abilities in graphics and personality are Important criteria when recruiting.

OPS2: How did you end up at Ubi, and on Splinter Cell? Through what set of imstances?

MD: My first project with Ubisoft was Splinter Cell Chaos Theory. Before that, I worked for two other companies in Montreal, which enabled me to gain experience as an artistic director.

OPS2: What do the professions of artistic director and level artist consist of? In what respect is it a cornerstone of videogame development today? MD: Artistic direction brings together covered how while fartistic managerial.

several key skills (artistic, managerial

and technical). You have to master all of the graphics in a project and have a clear vision of the result, even before you have begun production.

It goes without saying that you not only need to have a vision, but you need to know how to express it to others.

Mastering the technical limitations, in order to have a realistic idea of the feasibility of each idea is crucial. You also have to be able to analyse production times vs. graphics goals, since more than one profession is involved (level designer, sound designer, level artist, 3D designer, shader artist, programmer etc...). Badly carried out ambitions can have a negative effect on the final product.

Once in place, these ambitions must be used to their maximum on a daily basis before final approval.

OPS2: How has the profession changed in the past several years, given that graphic engines are more and more powerful and players' expectations are greater than ever? Did the advent of 3D, several years ago, transform a large part of the videogame industry and the entire Artistic Direction sector?

MD: The production becomes larger and larger, which makes the followup much more complex, while the technology guarantees richer visuals. I can't say that this affected DA We only really had to adapt to new technologies and production methods. On the other hand, it's clear that the demand for production skills quickly moved to 3D, unfortunately, leaving less room for the more "traditional" methods.

OPS2: How is a project, or a level, begun: brainstorming, visual research based on the script?

MD: We begin with a very small creative team: the Core Team. The first stage is to determine, through brainstorms, what the basic essence of the game and its environments will be. We then evaluate the feasibility of our ideas. We work on this model, as long as there appear to be missing elements or real worries. Once the basic model is approved by the entire management team, we begin a very in-

depth visual research process

Then pre-production begins. We now get to use all the new features and pipelines that will be used during the production. In this stage, the level designers and the level artists create a very basic level, showing the general idea of each environment and its game-plays. This stage is crucial, since this is when the entire structure is set. You wouldn't want a boat with the structure of a space station. We then move on to developing the maps, which makes up about 60% of the entire production.

OPS2: What is an artistic director's or level artist's position/function on a equel, such as Double Agent?

MD: Actually, working on the sequel in a successful series is a lot more challenging than you might imagine at first. It means you have to juggle with the artistic heritage of the trademark, while injecting unique elements into the new work

For example, we need to retain the idea of shadows and lights, which is one of the licence's signature visuals, and yet, the Double Agent experience necessitates a difference approach to this aspect.

OPS2: What kind of relationship/ interactions do you have with the other production departments?

MD: I interact with several departments. I first work with the 3D programmers, in order to develop new features; with the visual design team to direct and approve the sketches which will then be used as reference-points for the production; with the Interface Department, In order to get the most out of the navigability and the visuals; with the 3D designers in order to confirm proportions and shapes; with the shader artists to attain an unequalled degree of realism in the finish of

the materials; with the

lighting specialists in order to add the final touch of light to each environment; and finally, i work with the monitoring managers, in order to ensure that the deadlines are adhered to.

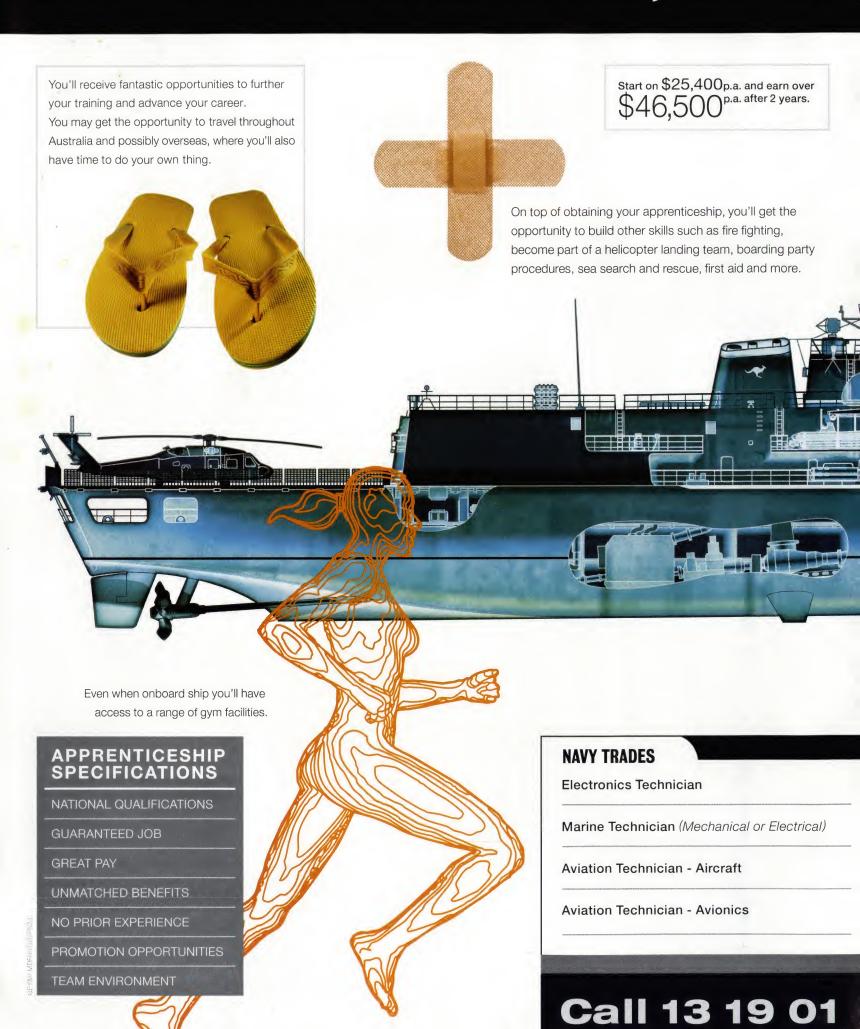
OPS2: Do you follow the game's evolution as it advances? How (meetings, versions)? How often eekly, daily)?

MD: Yes, daily. It's easy, with modern technology, to see the changes from one version to another. We can see a difference after just a few hours of work each day. We also have regular meetings with our team, in order to communicate and share relevant information on the project's progression.

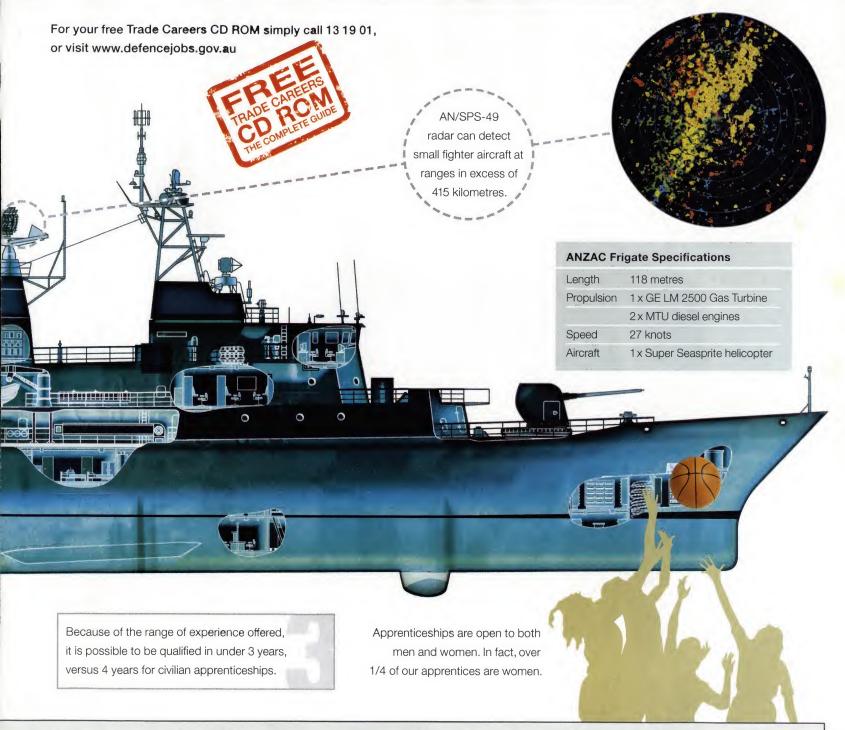
OPS2: In the Splinter Cell series, which episode was your best professional experience? And the most interesting? What have you retained from your ssional experience on this series? MD: The episodes in the series that I worked on were particularly difficult because of the very tight production deadlines. Everything happened so fast that it's difficult to say whether or not I took the time to stand back and appreclate a moment or not. On the other hand, i met several people without whom the game would never have got to this level. They are extraordinary people who brought me so much on a professional level.



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Come on, we know you guys are bursting to get involved. Share your thoughts with the nation's PlayStation 2 owners in the new, improved Feedback section and you could win this issue's Game of the Month! Write to us on paper or on a computer:

PO Box 1037 Bondi Junction, NSW 1355 Email: ops2@derwenthoward.com.au

OPS2 Feedback



es mags are written by people who don't play games very often, but not OPS2 – in fact, we play games so much here that we almost never manage to get a



1. MICRO MACHINES V4

Luke and Tristan have been building a serious racing rivalry this month. The current champ is Tristan Luke Tristan (sorry, our delete key



2. HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY

We've had a few worrled glances from co-workers overhearing us talk about "strangling people", "disposing of bodies" and "sniffing panties". But enough about our trip to Vegas!



3. GUITAR HERO

Phill airbrushed a naked chick onto his Gibson SG controller, now that's rock! Meanwhile Paul airbrushed a naked dude onto the hood of his : Way to misinterpret the term 'Hot Rod', felia

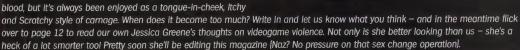
THE RATINGS WAR

I've been thinking, with the PS3 comes PS3 games (no duh). But with those PS3 games comes waaaaaaaaay higher levels of realism in-game, so my concern is; without the R18+ rating we so desperately need, will there be more games than usual that end up getting banned by the OFLC? I sure as hell hope not, or else they'll have a massive problem from me and thousands of others, I might even have to sick Paul on them. Anyway, thanks for listening guys and er... gals. Love to hear your thoughts on the matter.

Chris, via email

That's a very interesting point you raise, Chris. There's no doubt that thanks to the extraordinary processing power that the PS3 provides, games are certainly getting closer to reality in terms of both audio and visuals (Ubisoft's Brothers in Arms: Hell's Highway is an example of a PS3 game that is nigh on photoreglistic at times). You'd have to presume that as videogame violence becomes more lifelike, that the OFLC will only become stricter in the classification process. But how realistic do you want your blood and guts to get? Most of us have had a laugh sniping off heads in the GTA series, and witnessing the resulting fountains of

............





I love your mag, it rocks! I just wanted to ask why great looking games on PSP don't come out on PS2? I've got an Idea to rectify this, all that needs to happen is that when a PSP game comes out and ends up going Platinum, reformat it to go on PS2! Also, In OPS2 #51 you did "The Top Ten reasons why PS2 makes the world a better place". You said you hadn't seen a triangle since school, but then I looked at the [DualShock] controller and at the top of the right hand side is a... triangle! What's up with that? Keep the awesome work coming!

Sorceress Kyrsty, via email

With the number of PS2 owners on the planet (well over 100 million) compared to the comparatively small number of PSP owners (rapidly approaching 10 million), it certainly makes sense for publishers to port their PSP titles to PS2 and drastically increase their chances for sales. We've seen it with this month's GTA: Liberty City Stories, which is an absolute certainty to dominate PS2 sales charts for months to come, and could possibly lead the way for other PSP gems to hit the home console. As for the triangle thing... er, we're 'geometry blind'. It's like being colour blind, only we see triangles as rhombuses. And that's why we could never have a career in structural engineering.

EARKED YSCK

Well, well, well. Guys, guys, guys. Did I touch a little nerve in your tiny but oversensitive egos? I must have done, or you wouldn't have been

reduced to making such a pathetic wisecrack about my name - and I note you didn't have the guts to print the rest of that letter (Cuttings, OPS2 #53). I've heard that wisecrack before anyway; I used to be a bartender; so there's not a lot I haven't heard before. So you think I'm gay, huh? That's been said before too, and by better men than you. Don't worry; I'm not offended, I'm just glad you can put words into complete sentences now. What's wrong with a little self-discipline, huh? What's wrong with a man walting till he finds the right girl? Or, shock, horror, waiting till he's married, as I'm doing? And the girl I'm going to marry is totally hot and could pass for Jessica Alba's twin sister, so who needs to go with other guys? Just don't forget one little thing, what goes around comes around... so sooner or later all your picking on

Paul is going to come back and bite you in the arse. Don't say you weren't warned.

Harry "Hairy Boys" Boyes, via email

Itchy and Scratchy: violence that everyone can enjoy?

The last thing we ever intended was to offend one of our readers, and certainly we were just being playful when we made the comparison between Harry's name and a commonly used euphemism for a pair of testicles. So when this letter arrived, we instantly felt remorseful. But then we started thinking of other names for balls; maybe we can't use hairy boys anymore. but at least we've still got classics like Jatz Crackers, cock weights or "the twins". Suddenly we were smiling again; we really felt relieved. If only all of life's problems were so easy to remedy.





OP52 TO OP53?

Hi I'm a 14 year old chick from Tassie and as such don't have the money to buy the PS3 and my parents are tightarses. I was wondering if (when the PS3 comes out) you will continue to be OPS2 or will you turn into OPS3? I don't really mind either way but I'm having a hard enough time getting my parents to cough up the cash for the mag as it is without them having ammunition like "you don't need it; you have a PS2". I would just like to know if it will change or if it will (total horror if it does) stop selling, I don't think I could live without you guys! P.S. I'm sure Paul Isn't as bad as you all sav he is (cough, cough).

Alyce Potter, via email

No need to worry, Alyce. OPS2 Isn't going anywhere; it's just going to get a whole lot better when the PS3 launches this November We'll be

featuring all the latest news, previews and reviews for all things PlayStation - meaning PS2, PSP and PS3 - all in the one mag! PSone games aren't likely to feature, though. Honestly people, just let it go – you don't see us clinging to the past, do you? Sure, sometimes we stay up late, gazing at our high school sports trophies, dreaming of what might have been and crying ourselves to another night of restless sleep but... walt, what were we talking about?

BLIND DATES

It seems to me that game companies can't seem to release games on time. About 80% of the games I currently have, I've had to wait to purchase them. It really annoys me, because It happens too frequently. Just recently I went to get DragonBall Z: Shin Budokal for PSP, and the people at the store said it has been pushed back a week. Why the hell can't they just release them on time? When movie companies release a new movie on a set date, that promise is kept, as with music albums. What makes games any different?

Leigh Sampson, via email

We're sure that many of our readers share your frustration, Lelgh. There's a number of factors that can Influence the delay of a game's release date, particularly here In Australia and New Zealand as we're lumped in with the other PAL territories in Europe and have to wait not only for games to be converted from NTSC to PAL but also for a bunch of languages that most of us don't use to be added. Surprising though it may seem, simply adding extra languages to the menus of games can create brand new bugs to arise In a game, and so that game must go through the testing phase all over again, often resulting in a slip for the release date. But with the region free gaming of PS3, things just might change...



STANPING EALL,

I would just like to say how fantastic it is to see some great local games finally coming out. i have both AFL 2005 and Rugby League 2, and both are fantastic games that are a bundle of fun. You can really tell they were made for people down here at the arse end of the Earth. Hopefully these examples can convince other developers that making great games is possible within the constraints of a tight budget. As I sit here and admire the achievements of our local PS2 experts, I can't help but wonder if there are any PSP games you guys might have some knowledge of that are being created by Aussies or Kiwis? And if there aren't any on the horizon, why not?

Tom Hughes, via email

Amen to that, Tom. We've got some incredible talent creating games in both Australia and NZ with IR Gurus and Sidhe Interactive, the teams behind the two sports games you mentioned. along with the likes of Pandemic, Melbourne House and Team Bondi (currently at work on a secret PS3 project) to name just a few more. GripShift is the only locally developed PSP game we can think of, but we're sure as the PSP market grows larger there'll probably be a few more PSP titles produced in Australia and NZ But it's up to all of us to support local developers by buying Aussie products, such as AFL 2006 and the upcoming Destroy All

CUTTINGS

Snippets from letters that made us laugh, cr

MESSY BREAK-UP

I'm so sorry I haven't emailed you for ages! After my holiday in January we had to get broadband and it took about a week to install. But I didn't rget about you!

Actually, Linda doesn't want to speak to you, Dom. You see; she's kind of with us now. We're dating. Boy, you really shouldn't have taken that holiday! Oh by the way, she wants her Pussycat Dolls CD back.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

2007 PS3 preview in *OPS2* #54 must not be a real wrestling fan as he got Kurt Angle mixed up Daniel, via email

That was written by Sally – she's always making mistakes like that. Walt, did we say, "Sally"? Because we meant to say Paul. We're always getting him mixed up with

BURIED PLAYGROUND

I'm really sad about Playground being canned and the useless facts being taken Michael, via email

We're sorry to hear that, Michael, but according to the results of our recent reader's survey you're the only one that misses Playground. We'll still be covering kids games in the main sections of the mag, but if you want some useless facts then you might have

DRUGS ARE BAD

ere's a rumour I heard; Paul opens the door, unzipping sound. He never got his pizza from that delivery man. Enough about Paul (before we all start growing wings and become fairles).

Yasheer, WA

Two can play at that game. Staircases can't whistle. Used car parts! Dancing on the celling is good for punctuation (tell that to a cactus mailina a letterl.

WIN OR LOSE?

I got a question to ask Why don't you show the winners for every competition each month in Info Nudge. People can still win these comps right? Ben Robertson, via email

Absolutely, Ben. Rest assured we draw each and every competition we run, it's just that sometimes we don't have enough space to print all the winners because we've crammed too much of the latest PS2/PSP/PS3 news In. Trust us, if you win something you'll hear about It!

LONELY HEARTS CLUB I'm writing this at school. Who else thinks Lara Croft is hot? Damn, I need a girlfriend...

Well how are you ever going to get a girlfriend when you spend all your time staring at Lara Croft? Our solution? Stick two identical

pictures of Lara Croft on the inside of a pair of sunglasses, that way you can stare at Lara and talk to girls at school at the same time. Why do you think Stevle Wonder always wears shades? That dude sure as hell

Guitar Hero: more fun than a PS3?

NEXT-GEN? NOT YET

I Just thought I'd comment on the quality of games shown recently at E3. With the PS3 on the way I could understand it if developers decided to focus solely on developing games for the new platform, but no, It seems that they have not forgotten those that will not be able to afford a PS3 when it launches in November. With games like FFXII, God of War II, Destroy All Humans! 2, ATV Offroad Fury 4 and Lemmings for the EyeToy, as well as great multiplayer games like SOCOM: Combined Assault, Gultar Hero and Gultar Hero II - I think I'm going to be still happy for quite some time with my PS2. But I guess for every great game there are 10 lacklustre attempts out there (but hey, lets focus on the positives...). Anyhoo thanks for listening to my rant.

Macca, via email

Absolutely, Macca. Like the Energizer bunny on No-Doze pills the PS2 just keeps going and going, and looks set to consistently add to its library of AAA titles on a regular basis for several years to come. However, by not picking up a PS3 you'll be depriving yourself of the likes of Assassin's Creed, MGS4, Call of Duty 3, Heavenly Sword, The Darkness, Motorstorm, GTAIV... the list goes on, and unlike the Xbox 360 the PS3 will actually be completely backwards compatible, meaning that if you upgrade to PS3 you can effectively have the best of both worlds. Obviously the PS3 doesn't come cheap, but what good things in life are cheap? What? "Longneck beers and McDonalds cheeseburgers"? Hmm, you've got us there. Well played, sir.

IT SHOULD **BE A GAME**

If you've got a great idea for a game, email to the usual address. Don't forget to create a cool looking cover. The best one each onth scores a free copy of the game of



GRAND THEFT AUTO

Join Carmello Vanchez as he takes on the streets of Martian City. Set in the year 3000, you will find things like hover cars, futuristic weapons. teleporting portals,

hover bikes, and many er futuristic fantasies. Carmello has to take on the gangs of the future and the police to protect his land.

Martin Pliksh, Vic

OPS2 verdict: We've done the '80s with *Vice City* and the '90s with *San Andreas*. But the past is sooo yesterday, bring on the future!



WORLD PUB TOUR

Work your way through numerous pubs around the world, starting off at the local and finishing in the legendary ireland. Participate in over 50 minigames including darts, pool, picking up, skulling, shouting and

many more. Are you pub material or do you get a sore head after a sip? Darcy Franklin, via email

OPS2 verdict: We've been training all our lives



Whether you're making new albums, figuring out if you're eating chicken or tuna, or breaking up with your newlywed YOU get to do it all. You can buy two versions for the kids, uncensored for the... bigger fans of

Mark Fox, via email

OPS2 verdict: Predicted sales figures? Censored ion; 3 coples. Uncensored version; a bajillion



SOLDIER ON THE

Features gameplay like Medal of Honor and GTA combined. Finally you can play as the soldier the way you want to with character creation and a good or evil system where YOU

can choose which side you want to be on. Ethan Mooney, NZ

OPS2 verdict: You want Medal of Honor in a free-roaming environment? Medal of Honor Airborne just might make your



LIMITED EDITIONS

The reason I'm writing is that I've noticed a startling difference in quality between some NTSC games and their PAL counterparts. Two recent examples that come to mind are Dragon Quest VIII and Magna Carta. The PAL releases were stand-alone games with no extras and In the standard case. The US version Magna Carta had a deluxe box, bonus poster, art book and a strategy gulde. The US Dragon Quest VIII came with a Final Fantasy XII demo which is absolutely brilliant!!! Now considering that games usually come out in the US six months before the PAL version, retail between Australian \$60 - \$70 and come with goodles that PAL regions miss out on. why do most new games here cost \$100 for what is essentially an inferior package overall? What is the cause for this \$30 - \$40 gap that PAL region gamers must pay each time they pick up a new game? Is it translation costs, licensing costs, exchange rates or something else entirely?

Tim Chan, via email

The reason we pay a little extra for our games compared to Americans is Indeed due to a combination of the things you just mentioned. Tim. It's not just games either but electronics, clothing, cars - pretty much everything Is cheaper in the USA than it is down under As for the limited editions of Dragon Quest VIII and Magna Carta, there are more than 20 times as many PS2 owners In the US than there are In Australia, and so publishers are more likely to spend the extra production costs to create special editions of games in North America because they sell so many more there than they do here - particularly RPGs, which don't normally do huge numbers locally (Final Fantasy is the exception to the rulel.

SAVING PENNIES

I'm glad to see that I won't be waiting till 2007 for my PS3; that would have just irritated me. There is definitely one good thing about waiting six months for it; I can save up. Anyway I heard the price will be 1000 dollars, can you please confirm or is it too early to know? Either way I'm about as impressed with the PS3 as Paul was when he lost his virginity to the local mail man, and that's pretty impressed but the only difference is, I don't go telling my friends about it. Nathan Richardson, aka Greatest Person On Earth, via email

PS. Tristan, you're the second greatest - Goddamn it I respect you!

The PS3 will be released in two configurations. the base model for \$829 (20GB hard drive, no HDMI, no Wi-Fi, no memory stick slots) and the top of the line model for \$999 (60GB hard drive, all the trimmings). Keep in mind that if you opt for the cheaper base model, you can effectively upgrade everything else down the track (except for the HDMI port). But you're right, the PS3 is looking absolutely incredible and November can't come too soon (unlike Paul, who according to the graffiti in the office toilets can and does come too soon). As for the question of who is the greatest person on Earth, Tristan wishes to challenge you to a game of 'Rock, paper, scissors' for the title. Tristan says, "Rock Now it's Nathan's turn". He's certainly not the second smartest person in the world, folks.





INSIDE GAMING!

Tristan talks with Mickey Mouse from Kingdom Hearts II

Tristan: Oh Mickey, you're so fine! You're so fine you blow my mind! Hey Mickey! [claps hands] Hey Mickey!

Mickey: Dude, that was seriously gay.

Tristan: Ah, sorry about that. Hey, wait a second - how come your voice is so deep? You're usually so squeaky in front of the cameras.

Mickey: Yeah, that was all Walt Disney's idea. Back in the early days my lines were actually all dubbed by Walt himself. Not many people know this, but Walt was actually born without any balls - he was a natural eunuch - and so he spoke like a boiling kettle. Anyway, seeing as though he's cryogenically frozen and all, these days they just increase the pitch of my voice with computers.

Tristan: I see. And who's idea was Goofy? I mean, what's up with him? Is he a half-man, half-dog? A 'mog'? Kinda scary for a kid's cartoon character he's the freakin' wolfman!

Mickey: It gets scarler: his name might be 'Goofy', but he actually likes to get 'freaky'. One time I walked in on him playing with Donald Duck's feather boa. I tell ya, there's a reason that duck doesn't wear pants - it's because no pants can hold him.

Tristan: Tell me some more gossio! Chip. and Dale; are they really... well, you

Mickey: Pecking each others wood? Oh, you betcha. Believe me, Dale's nose isn't the only thing he's got that's red and throbbing. That's why we put them in charge of the Gummi Ship mods in the first Kingdom Hearts - just to give them something else

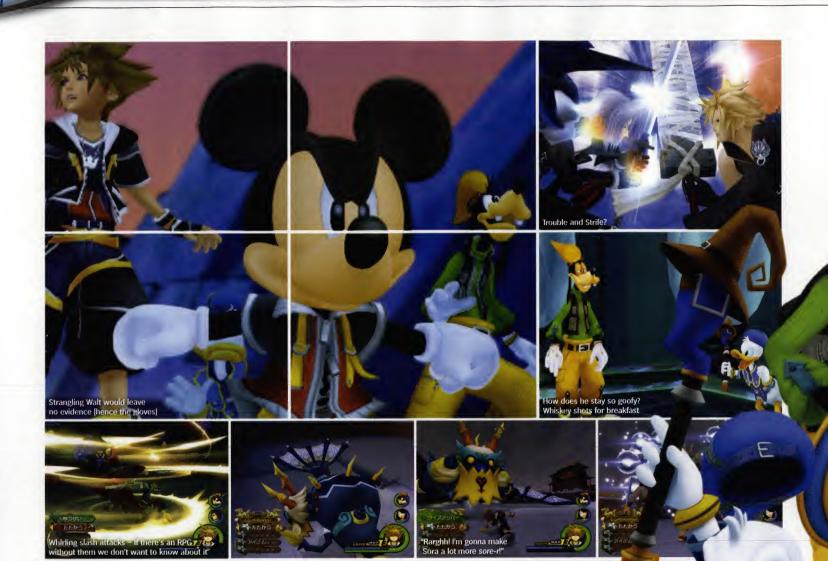
Tristan: And Pluto?

Mickey: Raging alcoholic. He carries a barrel of whiskey around his collar like a St Bernard, and he wears one of those beer can hats with the straws; the 'foam dome'? The other day I threw a tennis ball and told him to fetch it. He accused me of "cheating on him with his sister", then he threw up all over my shoes and fetched more beer money from my wallet.

Tristan: Well, I guess there's a reason they don't call dogs a "mouse's best friend". Anyway, thanks talking to us and dishing all of the Disney dirt for us, Mick.

Mickey: No problem, I totally made it all up anyway. What? You thought I was serious? Where do you think the expression "taking the Mickey" came from? Me, baby. Me.





....

KINGDOM HEARTS II

Sora and the gang are back kicking Disney arse!

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1 DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT DEVELOPER: SQUARE ENIX WEB: www.kingdom-hearts.com LAST SEEN: OPS2 #54 RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

A scattered dream that's like a far off memory. A far off memory that's like a scattered dream". That's pretty much the gist of the opening moments in Kingdom Hearts II. The ensuing craziness you encounter will leave your head hurting like you've sculled a slurpee.

You'll kick off Kingdom Hearts II in Twilight Town as a young lad named Roxas. Tinsel Town is not just the set-up to the adventure that awaits you but it will also give you a rundown on the basic controls, how to fight and give you an idea of what Kingdom Hearts II is all about. You'll stroll around Twilight Town completing mini-missions for the town folk and also be introduced to the Heartless and Nobodies, who will be your main opposition.

THE LEGEND RETURNS

During your time in Twilight Town you'll constantly

have recurring dreams of Sora and his adventures from the original *Kingdom Hearts*. Eventually you'll find Sora and his buddies but strangely this is at the same time Roxas disappears. It doesn't matter though because Sora packs more of a punch than Roxas.

Sora has a new ability that allows him to fuse with other characters and summon special Disney characters. When the new Drive Meter Is full, Sora and one of his team mates can become one to unleash one of five types of forms. Like tequila shots, you will have to pace yourself with your Drive powers. Fusing too often with other characters will cause Sora to develop an AntiForm, which will send him into a darkness and make his team mates disappear.

The Drive Meter will also allow you to summon some special Disney friends. You won't be able to fuse with other characters and summon at the same time but you won't need to with the company you'll

be in. On your Journey you'll get to fight alongside Genie from Aladdin, Stitch from Lilo and Stitch, Peter Pan from Neverland and Chicken Little from, er, Chicken Little. They'll stick around as long as you've got Juice in your Drive Meter.

Unlike the original Kingdom Hearts, the characters you summon will have their own menu containing multiple actions. You can also perform co-operative moves with your summoned character and if you're good enough to nail it you can destroy everyone around you.

FULFILL YOUR FANTASY

Like the original Kingdom Hearts there will be some Final Fantasy guests stopping by. You'll run into 17 characters on your journey ranging from



three hotties from Final Fantasy X-2; Yuna, Rikku and Paine, to everyone's favourite character Cloud Strife from Final Fantasy VII. Like the previous Kingdom Hearts they won't be playable characters but they will fight alongside you in certain worlds.

Which worlds you ask? You can expect to drop into The Land of Dragaons from Mulan, Beast's Castle from Beauty and the Beast, Olympus Coliseum from Hercules, Timeless River from Steamboat Willie, 100 Acre Wood from Winnie the Pooh, Atlantica from The Little Mermaid, Port Royal from The Pirates of the Caribbean, Agrabah from Aladdin, Halloween Town from The Nightmare Before Christmas, Pride Land from The Lion King and Space Paranoids from Tron. It really is a much

should satisfy all Disney and Square fans.

Kingdom Hearts won the hearts of everyone when it was released in 2002 and while we've still got a bit of a walt before Kingdom Hearts II arrives in our laps, it's looking like it will be a bigger, better and more magical experience than anything you've ever played on your PlayStation 2. & Paul Frew

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

75%

KINGDOM HEARTS II throws you headfirst into some of your favourite Disney worlds to fight alongside all the characters you grew up watching on Saturday mornings. It's looking very promising so far.

ALL-STARS!

Like the last Kingdom Hearts, Kingdom Hearts II will feature some A-list Hollywood talent.

Having your bird constantly look over your shoulder – it's really annoying when you're trying to watch dirty movies on SBS



Haley has hit puberty so his voice is deeper this time around but he's still back as the hero, Sora, in $\it Kingdom\ Hearts\ II.$



JESSE MCCARTNEY

Teen heartthrob Jesse McCartney plays Roxas. Unfortunately for all you ladies out there he doesn't drop any heartbreaking tunes.



Count Dooku from Star Wars swaps over the good side and once again helps out Sora and Roxas destroy Organisation XIII.

ACTION

Justice League Heroes will feature a number of high profile voice actors, including Hellboy's Ron Perlman who will play Batman.

ALSO COMING TO PSP!

JUSTICE LEAGUE HEROES

Justice will be served...

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-2 I DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI DEVELOPER: SNOWBLIND STUDIOS WEB: justiceleagueheroes.warnerbros.com LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 I RELEASE DATE: LATE 2006

hy should you have to buy separate games for separate superheroes? Justice League Heroes will allow you to play as one of seven classic DC Comic characters - Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, The Flash, Martian Manhunter, Green Lantern and Zatanna - all for the one admission price (unlockable characters, including the Green Arrow, will also be included).

A meteor has hit the Earth, containing an arcane artefact broadcasting a signal heard by only one being in the universe, the Legion of Doom's Brainiac. in order to gain ultimate superpowers, Brainiac needs merely to locate a specific object to unlock the meteor artefact - and it's up to the Justice League to stop him. Trouble is, the object he seeks is located in the Justice League's Watchtower base on the moon...

Justice League Heroes is being developed by the team that created Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance. and like that popular action RPG the new game will also feature third-person action viewed from a topdown perspective and the option to play the entire game co-operatively with a second player. Each character has their own strengths and weaknesses, and overcoming the enemies is more often than not reliant on combinations of attacks between the two heroes on-screen.

Unlike the similarly designed X-Men Legends,

which featured specific team-up moves between characters, Justice League Heroes allows for much more experimentation in regards to how you coordinate attacks with your partner. You might use the Green Lantern to create a cage around an enemy and then get Wonder Woman to unleash a golden lasso attack, or get Batman to dump a flash bomb on an opponent and get Superman to zoom in and deliver a powerful uppercut to the stunned enemy's jaw.

We're not exactly sure what Martian Manhunter's powers are, but judging by his name we figure he must be a bit like Paul, only he's from Mars (like ail women, Paul is from Venus). And aithough we've never heard of her, Zatanna so far appears to be the coolest character of the bunch - she uses magic and is able to slow her surroundings into bullet time in order to get an advantage over her enemies, and speaks the name of each spell backwards when she casts them. Mmm, Satanic.

Levels take place in a variety of locations, including the Earth, the moon and even outer space. We're definitely keen to combine the talents of Batman and Superman in order to dish out the pain, but a combination of Wonder Woman and The Flash resulting in some sort of 'Wonder Woman Flash' is yet to be confirmed by the developers. C'mon, surely that invisible jet has an invisible bathroom for her to take a shower in? 📤 Tristan Ogilvie

SUPERMAN Vs BATMAN

Alter ego: Clark Kent ths: Too numerous to mention, although worth noting that he can see chicks naked whenever he wants Weaknesses: Kryptonite, that Alter ego: Bruce Wayne Strengths: Drives a cool car. has a butler, is good with

charities, hates lokes and riddles, bullets can kill him.

Verdict: Superman - he's a freakin' allen! Batman is just a billionaire human - he's a bit like Donald Trump (only Trump esn't wear prosthetic abs - that six-pack is 100% Donald, ladies



X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

JUSTICE LEAGUE HEROES is shaping up to be a cooperative blast, with plenty of classic DC characters to team up with and a host of unlockable extras.























SOCOM U.S. NAVY SEALS COMBINED ASSAULT

The final in the PS2 series seals the deal!

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1-32 DISTRIBUTOR: SONY DEVELOPER: ZIPPER INTERACTIVE WEB: www.socomcombinedassault.com LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER

fter three solid action games you'd expect Zipper Interactive to pack up its bags and go to work on a PS3 title. But it's not done with the PS2 yet. Oh no, it's not done by a long shot.

Finally the SOCOM series will feature a fourplayer co-op mode that will allow you and your buddies to team up online or offline to take out every last terrorist mofo . Each player will get to deck out their individual character with weapons of their choice so no one will have to get stuck being the sniper while the others are raising hell with assault rifles and rocket launchers.

Speaking of weapons Combined Assault will

introduce non-lethal weapons to the equation in case you come across an Important enemy that you need to bring in for questioning. You'll be packing pepper spray and tear gas to neutralise enemies but don't worry, your primary weapons will still be old-fashioned assault rifles so you won't feel like a helpless old lady too much.

Online multiplayer will once again be the main feature of Combined Assault. 32 players will be able to jump online and go at it. The Instant Action mode from the Fireteam Bravo PSP game will return for Combined Assault. For those unfamiliar with the mode, you get to choose any map from the game, the type of goal (rescue a hostage, eliminate

the enemies etc) and then go to war.

The SOCOM series looks to be going out of this generation with a bang and even when you get a PS3 you can still punish opponents because it'll be backwards compatible baby. Booyah! & Paul Frew

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

SOCOM U.S. NAVY SEALS COMBINED ASSAULT builds on SOCOM 3 bringing new weapons, vehicles and a four-player co-op campaign. Best SOCOM yet? Deal SEALED!









TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED

The first Test Drive game appeared way back in 1987 for DOS, the Atari ST and Commodore 64 - seven years before the first Need for Speed game.

Test Drive, test driven

ALSO COMING TO PSP!

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: TBC (ONLINE) DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI DEVELOPER: MELBOURNE HOUSE WEB: www.atari.com.au LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

p until recently Test Drive Unlimited was an upcoming PC and Xbox360 racer featuring a stable full of the best supercars the world has to offer and the ability to leave skidmarks from one side of the Hawaiian Island of Oahu to the other. We say up until recently because all the while those plucky Victorians down at Melbourne House have been busy prepping both a PS2 and a PSP version of this latest instalment of the long-running Test Drive series, right under our noses.

Boasting the majority of gameplay features on offer in the next-gen version, Test Drive Unlimited will feature 1000 miles of open road and over 70 of the finest, and fastest, automobiles around. You won't be seeing any Fiat Pandas or Holden Barinas in Test Drive Unlimited. it's all

about speed, and plenty of it. For instance the Swedish Koenigsegg CCR slated to appear in Unlimited has a 601kW (806bhp) twin-supercharged 4.7-litre V8 engine that packs 919Nm of torque and propels it from 0 to 100km/h in a brain-melting 3.2 seconds to a top speed of nearly 400km/h. That's Swede speed!

Expect to see a wide range of rides from the likes of Lamborghini, Ferrari, and Saleen. You'll even find a few vehicles of the two-wheeled variety, with crotch rockets from Ducati on the cards.

Test Drive Unlimited will Include a robust single-player mode with a variety of races, challenges and driving missions but what should really set it apart ought to be its server-based online play. With the extensive online

component you'll be able to compete against countless other revheads from across the globe in the game's persistent online racing world.

You'll be able to meet us at the starting line in September, but we'll bring you more soon. - Luke Reilly

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

85%

TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED looks like it could pack the glamour of Gran Turismo, the action of Need for Speed and the speed of Burnout all in one package!









JUST CAUSE

FUN FACT!

You want attention to detail? In Just Cause, rain isn't random - clouds must form and condense before you'll actually see any rain. Pretty slick!

Livin' la vida loca!

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1 I DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI DEVELOPER: AVALANCHE STUDIOS WEB: www.avalanchestudios.se LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

ust 'cause we previewed Just Cause last month doesn't mean we can't have another look. It's shaping up to be one of the biggest games of the year - literally!

We can't cram all we already know about this GTAmeets-James Bond blockbuster here, so you'll need to dig up last Issue for the Inside word on Just Cause's massive world and Rico Rodriguez's super-spy abilities. For now, we thought some fresh screenshots and a handful of juicy new details might tide you over.

Just Cause is set to include 21 story-based missions, all of which will be like mini action movies of their own, with body counts to match. However, to supplement the main story Just Cause will also boast a hefty 300+ side missions that you can tackle at your own leisure. The missions will vary significantly, but many of them will involve liberating the villages scattered across the 3,000 square kilometre island nation of San Esperito (there'il be around 100 of them!). Taking back towns from the powers that be will contribute to the general unrest in San Esperito - a country on the brink of revolution. A quick trip to the political map screen will show you what areas have been deemed unstable (it seems they're generally locales you've been running amuck in).

The general gist of Just Cause is to instigate a regime change by toppling the corrupt and dangerous government, but don't expect any non-

violent, phone-tapping, CIA-sponsored subterfuge here. Rico Is about a subtle as a sledgehammer - he doesn't deal in sneakiness, he deals in explosions. He's not going to prod San Esperito over the edge, he's going to shove it - and we certainly can't wait. & Luke Reilly

× PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

85%

JUST CAUSE is quickly becoming one of the most anticipated PS2 releases this year - bring it on chicas!









THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

Too bad Diesel's so expensive these days...

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1-4 (ONLINE) DISTRIBUTOR: EA DEVELOPER: EUTECHNYX WEB: www.eutechnyx.com LAST SEEN: OPS2 #54 RELEASE DATE: WINTER 2006

nderground street racing. It's not exactly uncharted territory when it comes to videogames. If anything it's a fairly wellworn formula.

We don't think The Fast and the Furious is going to redefine the rules of the road, but there should be enough in it to keep revheads occupied.

Set on the glistening streets of Tokyo, The Fast and the Furious will focus heavily on drifting. An extensive tutorial will teach you all you need to know about getting sideways, and Pacific Rim Drift Team rice rocket jockey Daijiro Yoshihara has been enlisted to make sure it covers everything.

It'll also boast the same nifty camera angles and

special effects you'll see in the upcoming flick, plus some pretty robust customisation options. Expect over a hundred licensed wheels, over 500 body kits from real JDM companies and up to 25 layers of visual customization for decals, vinyls and paint jobs. You'll even be able to swap out your entire engine for a bigger, more powerful donk.

Our time with the game was brief, but we do have a few concerns. In most cases we try to stay optimistic, but the last racing game Eutechnyx brought us was SRS: Street Racing Syndicate (and that was total balls). The fact that we're being constantly reminded that The Fast and the Furious is set in a world related to, yet separate from, the movie Isn't helping either. Hopefully The Fast and the Furious

isn't just SRS 2 with a new logo painted on it to ship a few million more copies.

We're not about to count our chickens before they hatch, but we are definitely going to stay wary of this one. 4 Luke Reilly

× PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS will need to be good to snatch pole position from Midnight Club 3 - will it have the horsepower?









ROGUE GALAXY

A new breed of RPG

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1 I DISTRIBUTOR: SONY I DEVELOPER: LEVEL 5 WEB: au.playstation.com LAST SEEN: OPS2 #51 RELEASE DATE: TBC

ost of the time when a game boasts that it has no load times it usually turns out to be total balls. The graphics are bad, the story is rubbish and the gameplay has as much depth as a Big Brother housemate. However, Rogue Galaxy could be one of the exceptions to the rule.

Rogue Galaxy features large environments that you can explore for hours on end with stunning visuals rivalling the Final Fantasy series. The worlds are not just single paths that lead you from point A to point B either. You can jump, swim and climb ledges Prince of Persia-style meaning you'll get to check out every inch of Rogue Galaxy's universe.

You'll also get into a few fights and these too will

be guite different to traditional RPGs. You'll have direct control over one of the characters with three other characters backing you up. There are two primary attack buttons and, coupled with your ability to jump, you'll have a host of combos to unleash. Combos won't end when an enemy dies either, like most games. Instead your character will instantly continue dishing out damage on the next closest enemy.

RPG fans should not get turned off by all the action because at its core Rogue Galaxy will still be a role-playing game. You will assign strategies to your AI team mates, acquire new special abilities by collecting kooky items and using pick-ups to transform them from puny pretty boy to... well,

super-powerful pretty boy.

Rogue Galaxy is looking to provide an intense action game while keeping the traditional RPG elements seen in games like Final Fantasy. Here's hoping Level 5 pulls it off. & Paul Frew

× PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

80%

ROGUE GALAXY mixes third-person action elements with traditional role-playing components making for what appears to be a totally engrossing adventure.









ATV OFFROAD FURY 4

ATV Offroad Fury 4 is also coming to PSP, and players will be able to exchange created courses between the two platforms online.

New Offroad on track for greatness?

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-8 II DISTRIBUTOR: TBC II DEVELOPER: CLIMAX II WEB: www.au.playstation.com II LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 II RELEASE DATE: LATE 2006

armac is for wimps. Real speed junkies favour getting whipped in the face by low tree branches and picking gravel and dust boogers out of their noses after a race - it's more of a thrill when you up the level of danger. The ATV Offroad Fury series has always been a brilliant multiplayer racing experience, full of offroad fun, and for the fourth game in the series the vehicle line-up has expanded to include a number of interesting new rides.

MX bikes, buggies and trophy trucks will all be included, and from our time spent with the game we're pleased to report that they each handle in a completely unique manner, with the trucks and

buggies handling pretty loosely on the dirt but packing plenty of torque, and the bikes being a bit skiddish but with the ability to turn on a dime.

Another surprising new inclusion in the game is the story mode, which we're told will be a V8 Supercars-ish plot that will take you from racing rookie to petrolhead professional. We were also told that ATV Offroad Fury 4 will apparently forgo CGI cutscenes, commonly used In most games out there, and use full motion video instead. Which should lend things an old school, Road Rash-on-PSone kind of charm.

in-depth vehicle customisation, a fully overhauled track editor and point-to-point races in free-roaming

environments packed with multiple racing paths are just a few of the reasons why ATV Offroad Fury 4 should easily be the most enjoyable offering in the series to date. We'll be sure to give it a good throttling in the very near future. - Tristan Ogilvie

× PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

ATV OFFROAD FURY 4 is graphically stunning, incredibly detailed and most importantly plenty of fun to play. Offroad? It should go off, period.

FLATOUT 2

Pedal to the metal

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-6 (ONLINE) DISTRIBUTOR: RED-ANT DEVELOPER: BUGBEAR ENTERTAINMENT WEB: www.bugbeargames.com LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 RELEASE DATE: AUGUST

e really do try to be optimistic here in OPS2 Towers, but it's not always easy. For Instance, we thought the original FlatOut was going to suck. And blow. At the same time. We don't really know why - perhaps it was the cheesy name, perhaps it was the fact that during Christmas 2004 we were too busy playing GTA: San Andreas, but either way our hopes weren't exactly high when this unknown quantity slipped quietly into the office.

Fortunately we were wrong. It rocked. Now don't misinterpret us - FlatOut is far from the best game ever made. It is, however, without a doubt one of the most surprisingly good games we've played.

Naturally, we were pretty stoked to learn of the upcoming sequel and we're equally stoked to inform you it's shaping up mighty well.

FlatOut 2 will ship will a bevy of improvements, a more extensive career mode and twice as much of everything. Vehicles? Twice as many, ranging from muscle cars, sports cars, pickup trucks and compacts. Tracks? Twice as many - you'll be tearing up street circuits, storm drains, mountain forests, cornfields and the scorching desert. There'll also be twice as many destruction arenas and twice as many hilarious ragdoll minigames.

The tweaks to the career mode ought to make for a better single-player experience. The original FlatOut was a multiplayer blast, but the single-player was a bit limp. As a result, Bugbear has replaced the generic drivers with a variety of unique characters, each of whom will have their own distinct personality and racing style. Giving the racers their own identities should make it easier to keep tabs on who's leading and tralling you in points and make targeting threats (by siamming them into a pole) nice and simple.

Each and every track will have over 5000 destructible objects that you'll be able to smash, bash and crash through. Combined with damage effects that rival the likes of V8 Supercars 3 and Driver: Parallel Lines, could FlatOut 2 be the most destructive racer ever? With a greater emphasis placed on causing mayhem and carnage on the track by offering greater rewards, it's certainly not out of the question!

Unlike the original, FlatOut 2 will support six players online and up to four players offline. Fourplayer split-screen multiplayer is a lofty goal but it will be a massive jewel in FlatOut 2's crown. Not even Burnout Revenge, currently the PS2's most destructive racer, can match that.

It's also set to boast the sweetest soundtrack this side of Guitar Hero with the likes of Audioslave, Papa Roach, Megadeth, Fall Out Boy, Mötley Crüe and Aussie rockers Wolfmother all making an appearance.

Keep you eyes and ears open for a review plenty soon. & Luke Reilly

The original FlatOut has gone on to become a genuine sleeper hit, shipping in excess of 800,000 copies worldwide since its release.

RAGDOLL OLYMPICS

driver through the windscreen and into a giant dartboard, or over a 100-metre-tall high jump, are returning with a vengeance - and this time you can use some slight aftertouch to influence your flying driver's movement. Old faves like Darts, Bowling and High Jump return, but they'll be joined by nine new games ne Skipping has you skimming your driver across water like a pebble on a lake, Royal Flush has you shooting your driver at giant playing cards to make a wining hand and Ring of Fire has you arcing your driver through a series of increasing smaller flamlng rings. Curling, Skl Jump, Fleld Goal, Basketball, Baseball



PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

85%

FLATOUT 2 will be bigger, brasher, louder and prouder than the original by a country mile. Move over Burnout?



Rubbin' is racin'. What? Haven't you seen Days of Thunder?



In about two seconds he won't be needing those fake fla

















JAWS UNLEASHED

A shark tale with bite

unsuspecting fisherman at a time, while simultaneously frenzled beast that lurks beneath the surface

desperately trying to wrap its jaws around some meat - it may sound like the reason to never invite Paul over to your pool party (if you do, wear an extra few pairs of boardshorts), but it's also a description of one of the most feared sharks in the history of cinema (keeping in mind the only other famous movie sharks we could think of were Bruce from Finding Nemo and Paul Newman in The Colour of Money).

We'll admit it; the premise of Jaws Unleashed sounds absolutely ridiculous. Since the events of the movies, Amity Island has grown large in terms of economy and population and it's up to you, as the infamous Great White Shark, to start thinning the population out one

evading both a renowned shark hunter out for your blood and a marine biologist plotting your capture.

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1 IN DISTRIBUTOR: THQ IN DEVELOPER: APPALOOSA INTERACTIVE IN WEB: www.jawsthegame.com IN LAST SEEN: OPS2 #42 IN RELEASE DATE: WINTER 2006

But fortunately the game is totally tongue-in-cheek and fully aware of its silliness, and more importantly it's a fishnet full of fun. You basically spend the bulk of the game stalking the waters like an angry Ecco the Dolphin, snatching at surfers and fisherman and tearing them to fleshy shards. You can even target individual body parts, so you might gnaw on a limb or just bite their head clean off, and you've also got 'flair moves' allowing you to clamp your jaws on a swimmer's torso and swim along the ocean's surface sideways with your victim flailing above the water - kind of like a Seaworld show gone horribly wrong.

There's also a stack of story missions and hefty boss battles with killer whales, giant squids and even powerful motorboats. We'll know if Jaws Unleashed offers gameplay to sink your teeth into or if it just plain bites when it invades our waters late this winter. 4 Tristan Ogilvie

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

85%

JAWS UNLEASHED should be armed to the teeth with laughs and action. Just when you thought it was safe to presume that movie-based games all suck...









THE LEGEND OF SPYRO: A NEW BEGINNING

Unleash the purple beast

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1 IN DISTRIBUTOR: VIVENDI GAMES IN DEVELOPER: KROME STUDIOS IN WEB: www.spyrothedragon.com IN LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK IN RELEASE DATE: LATE 2006

ou can't help but have a soft spot for Spyro. After being dumped by Insomniac for Ratchet and Clank, the purple dragon hasn't been the same since his PSone days. Aussie developer Krome Studios plans on taking Spyro back to those glory days... literally.

A New Beginning is the story of how Spyro became a super hero, so for most of the game you'll be learning how to breathe fire. It's not just simple inhaling and exhaling; your breath is completely upgradeable and actually resembles real life weaponry like shotguns, grenade launchers, machine guns and of course, flamethrowers. Spyro's breath will have three levels of destruction with the

third level being able to clear a room faster than a Daryl Somers concert.

That's not the only new trick Spyro has up sleeve. He'll also have elemental attacks like being able to turn enemies into snowballs or great balls of fire. He can then smack them around with his big purple tail and even launch them into the air to wall on them some more. It'll feel a lot like a game of aerial ping pong, badass dragon-style.

Another big feature for A New Beginning is the inclusion of Hollywood voice talent. Krome has managed to nab The Lord of the Rings' Elijah Wood to play Spyro, Joe Dirt's David Spade to play Spyro's dragonfly sidekick Sparx and Batman Begins' Gary Oldman to voice Ignitus, Spyro's Fire Dragon Elder and own personal mentor.

Spyro looks to be on track for a return to glory. With a top cast and an explosive arsenal we're looking forward to seeing him shooting his mouth off again on the PS2. - Paul Frew

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

75%

THE LEGEND OF SPYRO: A NEW BEGINNING goes back to the purple dragon's past to uncover just how he became the hero he is today.









ADVENTURE

OKAMI

This dog doesn't play fetch

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1 I DISTRIBUTOR: THQ DEVELOPER:: CLOVER STUDIO WEB: www.capcom.com LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 RELEASE DATE: LATE 2006

ur dog's talents include smelling other dogs and occasionally catching a Frisbee (usually completely by accident), but the canine hero of Capcom's *Okami* is an old dog with a bag of crazy new tricks.

More specifically, he's actually a white wolf. Even more specifically, he's actually a mythical sun god in wolf's clothing who is out to decimate the forces of evil by commanding the elements to do his bidding. Orochi, a monster that's legendary in Japanese folklore, has turned the world into a wasteland and it's up to you the player to return the planet to its former state of beauty.

How do you go about it? By kicking some demon

ass, paint brush-style. The wet-nosed hero of *Okami* is endowed with a 'Celestial Brush', which might sound like a pretty sissy weapon but it's actually incredibly powerful. Weaker enemies can be toppled with your basic physical attacks, but come across one of the bigger adversaries and you'll need to use the brush to paint them... with DEATH! Precise brush strokes through their mid sections is usually enough to bring them to their knees, but you can also get creative with combos and even paint swirls to create powerful wind currents and blotches over enemy's faces in order to temporarily blind them.

The Celestial Brush is also used for solving puzzles, and early on in the game you'll be painting bridges to

cross over rivers and painting circles to represent the sun, in order to turn night into day. The game is like a Japanese watercolour painting come to life, and it's packed with personality and innovative game design. Definitely one to watch.

Tristan Ogilvie

Okami is actually the Japanese word for 'wolf'. So the

title is easily the least imaginative aspect of the game.

× PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

80%

OKAMI will be like watching paint dry; awesome, colourful, action-packed paint that gets you high without the toxic fumes.





ACTION

RESERVOIR DOGS

Stuck in the middle with you

PLAYERS: 1 DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI DEVELOPER: EIDOS

t's taken a bloody long time since it was initially announced, but the PS2 adaptation of the cult Tarantino classic *Reservoir Dogs* is almost here. The dialogue-heavy film is being brought to life in a similar fashion as Rockstar's *The Warriors* by going beyond the fairly narrow scope of the film and including more details about the back story of each character and the events that happened off-screen during the film. Fights, heists and car chases have been slotted in to make the game fun while staying true to the original narrative.

The action will be split between third-person action and driving, and

you'll be able to play them in two vastly different ways. You can stroll through each level wasting everybody that moves, blowing open doors and wreaking havoc, or you can use a little more style and utilise game mechanics like intimidation to coerce NPCs and police into coperating and, as such, avoid actually killing anyone. At the end of each level you'll be rated on your performance.

Reservoir Dogs will feature videogame whore Michael Madsen as the Infamous ear-chopping Mr. Blonde and should hopefully feature a kickarse K-Billy Super Sounds of the '70s soundtrack too. Luke Reilly





¥ PH771

LEMMINGS

Follow the leader

PLAYERS: 1 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: TEAM 17

emmings are strange creatures. They're a little stupid, they'll follow each other anywhere, they all dress the same and sometimes you just think you'll be better off blowing them all up and starting over. Sounds a bit like the core demographic for *Big Brother*, doesn't it? However, while the latter are deciding which pair of glant sunglasses to buy and hanging out in the local McDonald's car park, these lemmings are building stairs across lava-filled crevasses and avoiding spike pits.

They've already conquered PSP, but soon your PS2 will be invaded by these fuzzy blue blighters too. The aim will be as simple as it's ever been – get your lemmings from A to B within the time limit without allowing too many of them to cark it. *Lemmings* on PS2 will ship with 130 levels, but it'll also feature the ability to create, upload and download additional levels. You'll even be able to swap levels between the PSP version and PS2.

Lemmings on PS2 will also feature EyeToy support. You lemmings will be able to use parts of your body to safely span deadly gaps and traps, or if you're in a bad mood you can throw them around mercilessly.

Lemmings will be marching onto PS2 in September. Luke Reilly



slamming its top-fuel franchise into overdrive

our Dodge Challenger gurgles menacing on the start line, the highly tuned engine rumbling under the hood – just itching to open up. To your left sits a brand spanking new Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution iX. It looks pretty unassuming, but although it only has half as many cylinders as your Challenger (and not

near as much balls) this four-wheel-drive turbocharged rice rocket is going to be tough to beat. The road ahead winds off into the distance, perched dangerously along the side of a mountain. To one side, an uncompromising rock wall. To the other, nothing. When you're screaming through tight bends at triple figures, the only thing separating you from launching out into the emptiness will be a flimsy

guardrail. But there's no time to think about that now - It's go time. The canyon echoes to the deafening roar of your 440 cubic inch V8 Magnum slx-pack, your tyres squeal in a plume of white smoke and everything's that good about preemission control, pre-horsepower limits '70s engineering jolts off the mark like a stuck pig. The Lancer screams away too, clawing its way in front thanks to its rallybred all-wheel-drive system. He may have the lead now, but there's plenty of life left in your 35-year-old golden oldie yet - and you're not going away. You hound your competitor at every opportunity his rearview mirror is completely filled with the blaring headlights of your classic muscle machine. You throw your hulking beast into the turns with reckless abandon, your V8 donk growling with







every push of the throttle. In fact, you're so busy snapping at the heels of your wily opponent you don't notice the dangerous corner fast approaching. The Lancer's brake lights ignite and you slam on the anchors. But it's too late. You're out of control, sliding sideways towards the guardrail. Towards nothing. In an instant you wonder if they'll be able to identify your body once they scrape you from the flaming wreckage of your American icon. You wonder If your family will miss you. You wonder who'll feed your dog.

Welcome to Need for Speed Carbon.

The answer is canyon racing.

Canyon racing, or touge racing, is a phenomenon that began on the hillsides of Japan decades ago. When the streetracing scene was saturated with Hollywood and media attention, the secret was out and police were not amused. Suddenly, underground petrolheads needed to find new, less conspicuous places to race and potentially kill themselves. Racing enthusiasts from all over the world rediscovered the canyon racing fad quickly and it has since garnered a loyal, underground following in both Europe and the US.

Canyon racing is all about racing on the

you'll own the hood - simple as that. Nothing particularly revolutionary here, but the canyon racing and race crews will bring a fresh, new dynamic to the game,

You'll be exposed to these killer canyon runs pretty early in the piece. Once you and your posse start making a name for yourselves by shredding the streets you'll be challenged to a canyon duel by a rival crew leader.

These canyon duels are an entirely different style of racing to anything you've really experienced in previous Need for Speed games. Each duel consists of two runs. On the first run your car will be in the your own race team early last year. EA, however, plans to take it to the next level. The crews in Carbon will be formed mainly around car classes - tapping into the long-running rivalry between import tuner, purebred exotic and muscle car drivers. As you progress and defeat rival crews your reputation will grow. As your cred builds you'll be approached by more and more racers who want to roll with you. You'll only have a limited number of spots on your crew, but there'll be plenty of candidates to choose from. Each member will be unique and will benefit you on two levels. During races you'll be able to get them



ING OF THE

Need for Speed Carbon won't just be the newest installment in a series that needs no introduction, it'll be the first Need for Speed title on PS3. It's also coming to both PS2 and PSP and it'll be pushing those platforms to the very limit (as you'd expect), but naturally it's the next-gen version that'll be raising the most eyebrows. But aside from its suitably snazzy next-gen visuals, what is Carbon bringing to the table its Need for Speed forebears didn't?

edge. Quite literally, actually. Races usually take place along thin, treacherous stretches of road with steep cliffs on one side and sheer drops on the other.

How does canyon racing fit in to Carbon? Carbon is all about racing on the edge to inate the city. The overall goal will be to build up a crew and challenge rival crews for control of the city and surrounding canyons.

There'll be a number of major crews who rule portions of the city and its outskirts. You'll need to find them, race them and beat them. Once you own the best times in the hood, lead position, and for the second the follow position. The goal when leading is to go as fast as possible and put as much distance between you and the car behind you as possible. The further away you get, the more points you'll net. When following it's the opposite - you'll need to stay as close as you possibly can. The closer you are, the more you'll score.

CREW CUT

The concept of a race crew is not a new one – Juiced featured the ability to build

to block, draft and scout for you, and in the meantime they'll bring some form of tailored visual or performance upgrade to the table.

Canyon duels and race crews aren't all there is to Carbon - not by a long shot. Rest assured, there's plenty more but we can't tell you about it just yet. Carbon is promising a big online component, the next step in the evolution of visual customisation, a wicked car lineup and much, much more. Fortunately, we'll have the scoop on all that next issue - so keep the engine running.









METAL GEAR SOLID 4: GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS

We catch up with Metal Gear series creator, Hideo Kojima

ACTION

PLAYERS: 1 [TBC]
DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI
DEVELOPER: KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS
WEB: WWW.KONAMI.COM
LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55
RELEASE DATE: 2007

METAL GEAR SOLID 4 is so heart-stoppingly faritastic we've bought defibilitators to give ourselves a jumpstart every time we watch the trailer.

fter his new game stole the show at E3 2006, we decided to get Hideo Kojima on the blower to hear a few more of his thoughts on Solid Snake's upcoming PS3 debut. We totally do this sort of thing all the time – we've actually got a direct line to Kojima's office.

So what's the deal with MGSA? "In previous MGS games the player has always infiltrated enemy bases, be they jungle, mountain or manmade facilities," explains Kojima. "In MGS4 you won't be sneaking into an enemy compound; you're actually

entering the battlefield".

The setting of MGS4 is a hypothetical future based on the trends of modern warfare, at least from the perspective of Kojima and his team, in which soldiers aren't necessarily fighting for their respective nations but rather at the behest of major corporations and businesses. Apparently, the player will be able to decide where Snake's loyalty lies.

"If there's a war between country A and country B, you might sneak in without letting A or B know, and still complete the mission," says Kojima. "Or you could align yourself with A in order to possibly make it easier to complete the mission, or you could team up with B. Of course, you could also just destroy both of them. It really depends on what the player wants to do"

And what about the battlefield itself? According to Kojima it will be huge, like typical GTA environment huge, full of all kinds of nooks and crannys, despite the game's announcement back in 2005 that there'd be "No place to hide".

"We're trying to make the bulk of the







environment fully destructible," says Kojima. "But Snake also now has the OctoCamo suit – it's not like normal camouflage, it matches both the colour and the texture of Snake's surroundings. So in that sense when there is 'No place to hide', Snake can still disguise himself. He can hide anywhere and everywhere".

But enough about Snake, what about the actual Metal Gear? A whole pack of the new bipedal Metal Gears get sliced and diced by Raiden in the traller, but is there more than meets the eye? "I can't say too much, but obviously this is a *Metal Gear* game so fans can expect a brand new Metal Gear to fight," explains Kojima. "The machines you've already seen in the trailer, the ones on two legs – they're called Geckos – they're types of Metal Gears for certain, but there will be other types of Metal Gears in the game – potentially much larger as well. In the past the Metal Gears have usually been nuclear threats, but the new breeds of Metal Gears will not be nuclear weapons."

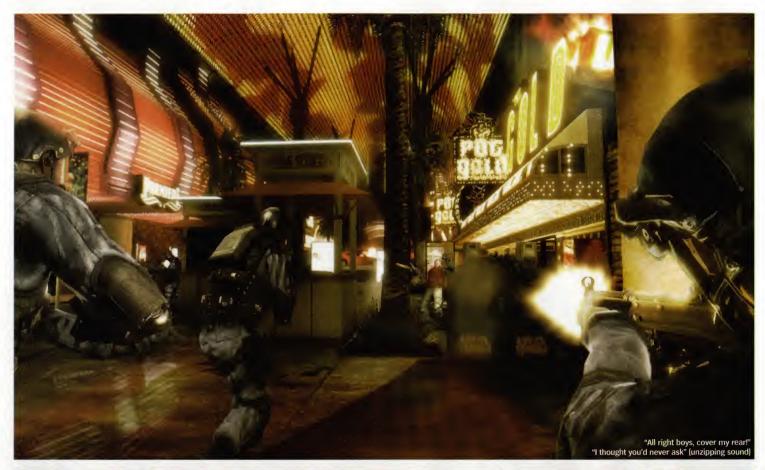
In MGS2, having to control Raiden

for the bulk of the game after spending the first hour or so as Snake was not a pleasant surprise. Here at *OPS2* we all thought Raiden was a bit of a Streisand, but he seems to totally rock in *MGS4*.

"The Raiden in MGS4 is not one hundred percent human, he might be digital or mechanical, we can't say just yet," says Kojima. "We were really surprised that there was so much negative feedback about Raiden after MGS2 because everyone on the team really likes the character. After the feedback we decided not to have Raiden

in MGS3, but as the father of Raiden I still love him, so for MGS4 we wanted to reinvent Raiden so that everyone would love him".

According to Kojima, the motion-sensing PS3 controller "works really accurately and will definitely be used [in MGS4]", and also the online mode in MGS4 will be "far broader than the one in MGS3: Subsistence", so MGS4 will pack much more than just jaw-dropping graphics. We want this so bad we can taste it, and it tastes like 'awesome'. - Tristan Ogilvie







RAINBOW SIX VEGAS

Jackpot!

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER

- PLAYERS: 1-
- DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT
- DEVELOPER: UBISOFT MONTREAL
- **WEB:** www.rainbowsixgame.com
- AST SEEN: OPS2 #55
- RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER

RAINBOW SIX VEGAS sees a new team, new tactics and new weaponry unleashed on the city of sin.

n invitation to Las Vegas would normally be met with loud cheers. But not from Team Rainbow. That's because they're hitting Sin City for business rather than pleasure. The team is hitting the strip to rescue one Dr Phillip Schmidt, Nobel Prize winner and advisor to DARPA and the UN, who's had some unwanted terrorists crash his private party.

We were being briefed about the mission in a chopper when we were interrupted by a rocket courtesy of the terrorists. We landed on the roof nearby and proceeded to clear the area of any tangos. We found a door leading to a staircase but chose to do some abselling down the side of the casino instead. After spotting some hostages being shot to pieces by the terrorists, we blasted our way into the casino through the glass and cashed in some tango chips.

LIGHTS OUT

We headed into the Sushi Bar next and

wasted a couple more tangos before scoping out what was happening in the next room courtesy of the new Snake Cam. It's basically an optical cable similar to the one Sam Fisher uses in *Splinter Cell*. However, you can use it to designate targets to your team mates. Then when you bust the door down your buddles will take care of their targets and you get to take care of anyone else left with a pulse.

We hit the casino floor next but before we could place a bet at the













roulette table we got ourselves into a firefight worthy of a *Lethal Weapon* movie. Taking cover will give you a third-person view and allow you to shoot blindly over and around cover. Depending on your aim you might hit your target, end up destroying a prize car or blasting a poker machine that will send small change flying into the air.

ALL BETS ARE OFF
The last sequence in the game

involved terrorists, hostages and a bomb. We set up our men at one door then used our "fast rope" to launch off the balcony. We took cover under one of the windows and tagged two terrorists for our buddles then ordered them to blow the door off its hinges. This distracted the terrorists so we could go through the back door and take out anyone our guys missed. When it was clear we disabled the bomb, gave ourselves a pat on the back then went looking for the bar to

buy a big round for the team.

The funny thing was that we could still hear ticking. As we looked over the stunning Las Vegas strip we saw a casino tower a few blocks up explode into a fiery inferno with the shockwave shattering the window leaving us covered in shards of glass. Unfortunately, this was against the Casino's dress code so we were then asked to leave. Needless to say we're looking forward to our next visit to Las Vegas. **Paul Frew**

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

A new generation means a new team for Team Rainbow. Your new leader will be recon expert Logan Keller. Backing him up will be heavy weapons expert Michael Walter and long-range specialist Jung Park. It might not be the threesome you've always wanted but they get the job done.







SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

There's no such thing as safe speeding

ADVENTURE

- PLAYERS: 1
- **DISTRIBUTOR:** THQ
- DEVELOPER: SONIC TEAM ■ WEB:www.sega.com/sonic/
- WEB:www.sega.com/sonic/
 LAST SEEN: LAST SEEN: OPS2 #54
- RELEASE DATE: 04 2006

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG will see the stalwart Sega superhero return to his roots. Old school kicks with a new school overhaul!

fter last year's extremely ropey and somewhat confusing Shadow the Hedgehog you'd be forgiven for thinking Sonic Team had lost the plot. Sonic with guns? What the hell were those guys smoking? However, if you were expecting Sonic the Hedgehog to be a radical departure from the roots of the seminal series, you'd be dead wrong. Why? Because while the spiky speed freak has enjoyed a sleek new makeover and the world he now

inhabits is like nothing you've ever seen in a Sonic game before – the reality is quite the opposite. Sonic Team is actually looking to reinvent the series by going back to basics. Sonic Team is alming to redeliver the blistering speed and frenetic action of the 16-bit originals, the memories of which are still firmly entrenched in the hearts and souls of gamers worldwide. While the game will retain a central hub where Sonic can go in order to chat with other characters

and dig up quests like he could in the Sonic Adventure titles, the levels themselves will be of the decidedly old school variety – supersonic sprints through all manner of stunning, super-detailed locations.

But although it's not straying too far from the original formula, rest assured that's not to say it won't feature all the amazing next-gen trimmings we've begun to expect from PS3 games.

Thanks to the incredible power









of the PS3, Sonic the Hedgehog will boast truly expansive environments packed with plenty of eye candy. One of the levels we were privy to was a panoramic vista of rolling hills covered with lush, green grass and dotted with majestic waterfalls and ancient, crumbling ruins. Sonic the Hedgehog on PS3 will feature a swag of amazing visual effects that just weren't possible on PS2. The incredible draw distance stretches way over the horizon and out of sight

and a full day/night cycle highlights the amazing lighting effects. Hell, If you get close enough to Sonic himself you can even see his surroundings accurately reflected in the gloss of his eyes.

Sonic the Hedgehog will be simple and unsurprising in scope – but great stories have rarely been the hedgehog's strong point. In a tranquil kingdom, Princess Elise keeps a chaos emerald – and an important secret. As you'd expect, the nefarious

Dr. Eggman gets wind of it and promptly kidnaps the princess and pinches the emerald. Cue Intense rescue mission.

Sonic the Hedgehog will also feature a brand new playable character, never-before-seen in the series. Silver the Hedgehog will boast an entirely different array of moves to his bright blue counterpart. Silver will be able to charge up a power meter that'll allow him to lift anything not bolted down via his telekinetic

powers, and throw it about at will. The Silver stage we played was very different to the previous Sonic level. The green countryside gave way to a post-apocalyptic cityscape of ruined skyscrapers, trails of lava and tearing tornados— all sitting beneath a scorching sky.

We expect Sonic the Hedgehog to boom onto shelves later this year, but there's still plenty more to be revealed about his next-gen debut so stick around. **Luke Reilly**

ALONE IN THE DARK

Lights out!



lot of people may have lost faith in the Alone in the Dark series after Christian Slater butchered the film adaptation, but Atari is hoping to revive it with a little help from the PS3.

Alone in the Dark will once again star Edward Carnby and this time he's got himself into a mess in Central Park. Some might think Central Park is not the greatest setting for a videogame but when you think about it its got a zoo, police precinct, museum, theatre, boathouse and various other landmarks so it's actually a well-picked location.

The game will be split up into several episodes that should take around 30 to 40 minutes to complete each. Finishing an episode and then turning off your console won't be as easy as saving and quitting. You'll get a short teaser of the next episode before you switch off your PS3, enticing you to play just a little longer. If you are strong enough to leave and then decide to come back a couple of days later then you'll be treated to a recap of your previous escapades.

One thing that won't feature in Alone in the Dark is a HUD display. Everything you need to know about, like health and ammo supply, can be obtained just by looking at Edward. To check your inventory you'll shoot into a first-person view and take a peak into his coat to see what he's packing. There'll also be no cut-scenes. All the action will take place in real-time right in front of your eyes and you can choose to stick around to see what happens or take off and get some action.

It's looking like a return to greatness for the *Alone in the Dark* series.

We'll know for sure in the upcoming months. **A Paul Frew**







SINGSTAR

Turn your PS3 into a karaoke jukebox





t's one of the most popular series on the PlayStation so it should be no surprise that it's coming to the PS3. While it won't push the PS3 to its graphical limits it's still going to be the next-generation party game to have.

SingStar's biggest new feature is the ability to download songs from the SingStore. Over 300 tracks from the previous SingStar library will be available as well as a swag of new tracks. You'll also be able download menu skins, voice effects and even make requests for new tracks to



be uploaded.

If you're confident with your singing ability you'll be able to upload performances you've recorded using the EyeToy to the *SingStar* community. You'll also be able to store these videos on your memory stick, hard drive and even send them to your PSP so you can show your friends how you nailed Europe's The Final Countdown'.

SingStar looks like it will pop, rock, send you back to the '80s and party hard. That's what we're talking about!
Paul Frew









MERCENARIES 2: WORLD IN FLAMES

Going down in a blaze - of glory

ercenaries 2: World in Flames has ditched drab North Korea for the sunny, jungle paradise of Venezuela. However, it's far from an isle of tranquillity at the moment – a dodgy oil company, a power-hungry tyrant and a ragtag regiment of rebels are all kicking up a stink. That's where you'll come in.

Provided you haven't been pissing on anyone's parade you'll be able to work for the highest bidder and rake in the cash.

The world itself will be larger than all

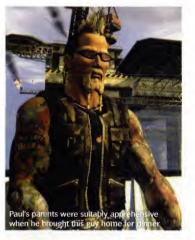
of the maps in the original Mercenaries combined, and it'll be totally destructible. As for vehicles and weapons? Tanks, luxury cars and bunker-busting mini-nukes are all in. You'll even have a grappling hook you can use to fire into helicopters, climb up, toss the pilot and pinch the chopper.

Also set to feature a two-player coop mode (and online hasn't been ruled out either) Mercenaries 2 should be an absolute blast. If you can see it you'll be able to buy it, steal it or destroy it – it's that simple. Boo-yah! Luke Reilly





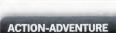






NAUGHTY DOG PS3 PROJECT (UNTITLED)

The game with no name



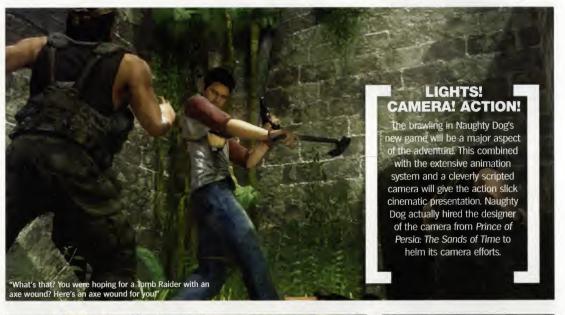
- PLAYERS: 1
- **DISTRIBUTOR:** SONY
- DEVELOPER: NAUGHTY DOG
- **WEB:** www.naughtydog.com
- # LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK
- RELEASE DATE: TBC

NAUGHTY DOG PS3 PROJECT (UNTITLED) may lack an official name, but it certainly doesn't lack potential. It looks bloody awesome.

he first thing you'll notice about Naughty Dog's recently unveiled PS3 project is that the eponymous duo Jak and Daxter are nowhere to be seen. The second thing you'll discover is that the normally heavily stylised Naughty Dog universes of yore have been replaced with a far more realistic setting. The third thing? It looks unbelievably wicked.

So yes, Naughty Dog's latest is a definite change of pace from its roots in both the Crash Bandicoot and Jak and Daxter series. The new hero is most certainly not an Australian marsupial, and is clearly bereft of pointy ears and a fuzzy sidekick. Naughty Dog's new torchbearer is distinctly homosapien. However, bucking the trend of inserting musclebound meatheads into games, Naughty Dog has instead opted for a more subtle approach - an average, unassuming everyman. At least, that's what he looks like at first glance anyway. Don't let the digs deceive you because while his casual threads are hardly the accepted attire for your average treasure hunter, he's no slouch either. Best described as a cross between Tomb Raider and Indiana Jones, our hero-tobe swung, leapt, punched, kicked and blasted his way through the dense jungle and dank ruins during our short glimpse of the game. What's most exciting is that not only was the trailer rendered entirely in real-time using Naughty Dog's new PS3 game engine but, according to Naughty Dog's own Evan Wells, what we saw was "just the tip of the iceberg" in terms of what we can expect from the gameplay in the finished product.

When it's launching, what it's called and what it's all about will remain a mystery for a while yet. Watch this space – this one will be huge. **Luke Reilly**













EIGHT DAYS

And on the eighth day, God created excitement

ACTION

- PLAYERS: 1
- **DISTRIBUTOR:** SONY
- **DEVELOPER:** SCE STUDIOS LONDON
- **WEB:** www.playstation.com.au
- **LAST SEEN:** FIRST LOOK
- RELEASE DATE: TBC

EIGHT DAYS follows two heroes, or anti-heroes, as they survive eight days of criminal life in the Arizona desert.



Eight Days was actually shown at E3 2005 and was only known as SCE London "Exploding Gas Station" PS3 project. We would have still bought it. he Eight Days trailer opens with the two stars peering into the boot of a car like Samuel L. Jackson and John Travolta in Pulp Fiction. However, what follows is not a 10 minute talk about foot massages but rather 10 minutes of blazing bullets and great balls of fire.

We pick up things on Day 2 in the Arizona desert where some gangbangers have created a roadblock. Meanwhile, the two stars are in an intense, high-speed shootout with another car. One of them leans out the window, shoots out the tyre of the other car and sends it rolling down the highway.

Cut back to the roadblock. As a tanker truck approaches from the

other direction, the gangbangers turn around to see the stars plough through their roadblock and screech to a halt. Now it's on like Donkey Kong, Bullets start flying in every direction as the stars take cover behind another a car. One realises he's out of bullets so the other tosses him a fresh clip. In one swift motion he reloads, slides across the bonnet and takes out an enemy. Realising he's got nowhere to hide he jumps headfirst through a diner window. However, there's a goon in there too and he opens fire. Fortunately he's a crap shot and shoots the bench to pieces. Eventually he's flat on his back thanks to some slick shooting from the hero.

As he jogs back outside a horn sounds. It's the tanker truck from earlier and it's now jack-knifed and closing in fast. The trailer completely wipes out the diner sending our hero running for his life. As bricks and debris begin to settle, petrol starts to leak from the ruined tanker onto the road.

With everyone but the stars bleeding out onto the Arizona desert, the two heroes walk back to their car – but not before lobbing a lighter into the leaking petrol which sends everything into a flery inferno. If this cinematic mix of extreme action and quick cut-scenes is anything to go by, we can't wait to see what happens tomorrow on Day 3! Bring it on. **Paul Frew**

















ALSO COMING TO PS2!

MEDAL OF HONOR AIRBORNE

Geronimo!



nfortunately, since our first look at Medal of Honor Airborne back in April very little has actually emerged about the epic Word War II franchise's next-gen debut.

The short glimpse of Airborne that EA's E3 trailer provided us did, however, leave us still feeling fairly optimistic. When Airborne's design director John Paquette told us that EA is aiming for a seamless experience, from the plane to the jump to the ground, he certainly wasn't lying. It kicks off with you trapped in a bullet-ridden C-47 with



anti-aircraft fire arcing through the sky, enemy Messerschmitts cutting through the formation and flak so thick you could walk on it. Suddenly the stricken plane snaps in two and you're falling through the sky. Next thing you know you're on the ground, the confused cries and barked orders of your squad mates and superiors echoing around you as your fellow paratroopers try to get the upper hand on a German gun emplacement. Atmospheric is an understatement. We'll keep you posted - over and out. - Luke Reilly









INFO BYTE The *Turok* franchise is based on the comic ok series, *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter.* The aracter, Turok, was created way back in 1954

TUROK

Sic 'em, Rex...

urok Evolution on PS2 may well have sucked Kirstie Alley-sized ass, but the original Turok on the Nintendo 64 was bloody good fun, thank you very much. And from what we've seen of this PS3 Turok update, the series could well be back on track.

Set on a mysterious planet in the near future, Turok appears to be an intense first-person shooter with an emphasis on survival ala Ubisoft's King Kong, Your primary enemies will be highly trained

human soldiers, but there will also be several breeds of bloodthirsty dinosaurs that will indiscriminately attack you, your enemies and each other.

There'll aiso be a fleet of high-tech vehicles to pilot and an extensive multiplayer mode, and weaponry ranging from the extremely excessive, such as miniguns and rocket launchers, to the sensibly stealthy, such as the bow and combat knife, as well as cool futuristic gadgets that you've likely never even heard of! 4 Tristan Ogilvie









ALSO COMING TO PS2 & PSP!

TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8

The Birdman gets his Next-Gen wings



couple of months ago we brought you an exclusive first look at *Tony Hawk's Project* 8 for PS3, and since E3 back in May we've been able to gather a lot more information on the long running franchise's next-gen debut.

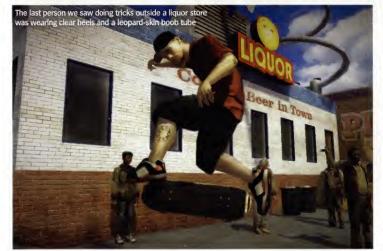
The story goes that you're a skating citizen of Podunk, Middle of the Midwest, Nowheresville, a sleepy little town that suddenly becomes the skating hub of North America seemingly overnight. Tony Hawk and his skating buddies soon hit town in search of some local talent, and it's up to you to impress the chairman of the board enough for him to let you join his crew.

Developer Neversoft actually built its own motion capture studio after the release of last year's Tony Hawk's American Wasteland, so everything in THP8 has been independently mo-capped - from the skaters tricks to the bails and even the actual boards themselves. The result is the most realistic-looking Tony Hawk game ever made, both in terms of animation and texture detail. Each of the professional skaters in the game have been body-mapped and mo-capped, right down to their different facial expressions, and each move transitions so smoothly from one to the next that it's hard to believe you're not watching a real skating video (that is, until one of the characters busts out a 1080 aerial spin and grinds along some powerlines).

Neversoft has also been tinkering with the control setup, specifically tightening the analogue stick movement to make it more usable for tricks.

THP8 will apparently be the largest Tony Hawk game to date, not only in terms of the size of the environment but also in the number of goals and side missions to complete. Come November it looks like the Birdman will be back in a big way indeed. A Tristan Ogilvie













FORMULA ONE 06

Fasten your seatbelts and start your engines!



one sim is taking it up a gear for its PS3 debut.

Naturally the game will look stunning. Running in 1080p, the F1 racers will be looking more realistic then ever before, and we're talking a *Gran Turismo*-like attention to detail. Not only will the cars look stunning but all 21 tracks and environments will also be full of life.

veryone's favourite formula

Another Improved feature will be the opposition Al. Each driver will have their own unique racing style, meaning you'll have to change your strategy as often as you change gears in order to pass them.

When Formula One 06 was showcased at Sony's E3 2006 press conference, one of the highlights was F106's PSP compatibility. You'll be able to use a PSP as a wing mirror, thus eliminating having to hit (a) to find out what's going on behind you. This way you'll always be one step ahead If an opponent is trying to get the better of you.

While there hasn't been any official word on whether or not Formula One 06 will incorporate the PS3 controller's motion sensing technology, we're fairly confident Sony's in-house studio will be able to work it in there somehow. If not, we're still certain F106 will deliver a top quality racing experience that won't get much better until Gran Turismo rolls into pole position. • Paul Frew

STRATEGISE THIS!

Talk about realistic. You'll have the option before a race to do a parade lap and when the safety car appears on-screen you can talk turkey with your racing coach and come up with strategies on how to take the chequered flag.















THE DARKNESS

He doesn't believe in a thing called love

ACTION PLAYERS: TBC DISTRIBUTOR: TAKE 2 DEVELOPER: STARBREEZE WEB: www.starbreeze.com LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 RELEASE DATE: 2007 THE DARKNESS is staying true to its name and promises to be the darkest,

INFO BYTE

Starbreeze has developed a new animation system, called Vo-Cap, that records dialogue and motion-captures facial animation at the same time

grisilest and most intense shooter yet!

alk about the ultimate birthday present. On the night of mafia hitman Jackie Estacado's 21st birthday he inherited the ability to summon a giant 10 metre dark tentacle that shoots out of his pants. It might be a little awkward when a total hottle walks by but it sure would put the fear of God into anyone standing next to you at the urinal. Oddly enough if you look at the credits for *Magnolia* you'll see Tom Cruise even dedicates his famous "Respect the cock!" speech to Jackie Estacado.

On the surface *The Darkness* looks just like a regular shooter (admittedly with insanely detailed graphics). You play through the game from a first-person perspective, using some serious

weaponry to ventilate everything in your sight. Once the Darkness powers kick in though, you see what a seriously great game this is. By using your guns to shoot out any nearby lights you not only make it tougher for your enemies to find you, but by shrouding yourself in darkness you can draw energy from the night and engage your Darkness powers.

Apparently drunk girls aren't the only thing you can pick up with a massive tentacle. Jackie can use his to pick up everything from cars to dumpsters. That would be a hell of a way to go. Imagine having your tombstone read "Beaten to death by a guy with his 10m tentacle wrapped around a car!" Jackie's tentacle is so long he can even use it to attack

guys on the other side of a city block by sending it through a building's ventilation ducts. Despite its length, Jackle's tentacle is just the tip of his powers. He can also use the Darkness to create black holes (see 'THE HOLE TRUTH') and call forth psychotic little goblins to command. In 2007 you WILL fear the dark! A Narayan Pattison

















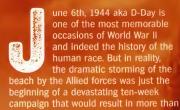








Call of Duty, indisputably the current king of the Word War II genre after the wonderfully authentic Call of Duty 2 on PC and Call of Duty 2: Big Red One on PS2, is set to invade the PS3 with Call of Duty 3. We sat down with developer Treyarch for a world exclusive look at the next generation of war based firstperson should be a considered.



600,000 deaths.

Call of Duty 3 is set to tell the story of D-Day's aftermath, through the eyes of four Allied countries, the US, British,

Polish and Canadians. It will allow players to experience chronologically the numerous campaigns that each led up to the liberation of Paris from the Nazis in August, 1944, including the concerted pincer movement of the Allies in an effort to encircle the German Seventh Army and Fifth Panzer Army, and catch Hitler with his lederhosen around his ankles.

If you are still under the impression that Medal of Honor is the brand you can trust when it comes to World War II videogames, then think again because despite the fact that EA's upcoming Medal of Honor Airborne certainly sounds promising, based purely on recent form you can bank on Activision's Call of Duty 3 to win the next gen WWII battle of the bulge. The most recent releases in the franchise, Call of Duty 2 for PC and Call of Duty 2: Big Red One for PS2, have both set new benchmarks for the genre, and from what we've seen of Call of Duty 3 we can only assume that developer Treyarch is set to once again raise the bar.

GUIDE YOUR ACTIONS

The COD series has always been about immersion; about providing the most realistic battlefield experience, one in which you're not fighting a war alone, Rambostyle, you're fighting it amongst an army of soldiers – each of them as wide-eyed and terrified as you. For its PS3 debut, Treyarch has taken the depth of immersion to a new level by introducing what it calls 'Battle Actions'. Whereas in previous games a lot of the interaction with your surroundings

CALL OF FAME











CALL OF DUTY PC (2003)

The original *Call of Duty* won numerous industry awards and established the franchise as the grittlest and most cinematic WWII shooter on the block. In the game, players parachuted behind enemy lines on D-Day, played a role in the British Special Forces' famous assault on Pegasus Bridge, and saw the harrowing battle of Stallingrad through the eyes of a Russian Infantryman.

CALL OF DUTY: UNITED OFFENSIVE PC (2004)

United Offensive built upon the multiplayer mode offered in the original game by adding tank-based combat. The ail-new campaign also allowed the player to Join the 101st Airborne for the climactic moments of the Battle of the Bulge and shoot down German ME-109s from the gunner's seat in a B-17 bomber.

CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR PS2 (2004)

Developed by Spark, a team which featured 30 of the Individuals responsible for the Medal of Honor series, Finest Hour brought the multiple-perspective war experience to the PS2 for the first time and allowed players to fight in campaigns through war-torn North African, Eastern and Western fronts. Vehicle combat was a prominent feature of the game.

CALL OF DUTY 2 PC (2005)

Setting a new benchmark for the series and drawing worldwide critical acclaim, COD2 was built around a proprietary new engine and served up expansive battlegrounds with multiple paths to victory. The Al was ramped up to new levels, allowing for realistic squad-based tactics such as outflanking and fire-andmanoeuvre movements, and the graphical effects were intense.

CALL OF DUTY 2: BIG RED ONE PS2 (2005)

From the blistering desert expanses of Tunisla and Algeria to the skles of Northern Africa and the deadly countrysides of Italy, France, Belgium and Germany, the story follows the actual route of the Big Red One (the US 1st Infantry Division) through Operation Torch (North Africa), Operation Husky (Italy), and Operation Overlord (Europe).

ARMY INTELLIGENCE

with the development of Call of Duty 3, is a retired US Army Colonel, decorated combat veteran and authority on World War II military history. He has spent his life coaching, mentoring and building teams, and leading them under stress. Keirsey has created winning organizations that have succeeded under the most demanding conditions, from field training and combat to corporate environm

Commissioned as an Infantryman h

Point, Keirsey's first tour of duty was with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Since then, Keirsey has served in a wide variety of leadership and staff positions both In the United States and overseas.

During the Gulf War, Kelrsey (assigned as Executive Officer) and his airborne infantry battallon spearheaded the attack into Iraq. Kelrsey was awarded the Bronze Star for his

After the Gulf War, Keirsey was assigned

to the Army's premier combat training center at Ft. Polk, Louislana, where he designed a course to train-leaders in critical decision making – later becoming the staff and leader-training model for the entire Army. Keirsey holds a Bachelor's degree from West Point, a Master's degree in history from Duke University, and has taught history and military ethics at West Point. He is also a master parachutist, a ranger, and has earned the Expert and Combat infantruman Badges. center at Ft. Polk, Louislana, where he Infantryman Badges.





you've been telling me about?

Hey Sarge, are they those 'glory holes

was handled by context sensitive button presses, in COD3 these aspects of the gameplay will be much more hands-on and involved, adding extra fear and intensity to what were previously rudimentary tasks.

An example of the Battle Actions could be as simple as rowing a boat, in which case you'll actually be rotating the oars with the left and right thumbsticks to propel yourself through the water. A more extreme case might be the planting of explosive charges on the treads of a Nazi Panzer Tank. in COD2 this was just a matter of standing beside the tank, holding down a button for a few seconds and then running clear of the blast. But in COD3 you'li actually have to physically place the charge with a combination of the thumbsticks and shoulder buttons to both set it and activate it, so you can imagine how high your heart rate will be when you're trying to successfully plant a bomb with bullets whizzing past your skull.

The Battle Actions aren't just a part of the interaction with vehicles and explosives; they're also used up close with the enemy soldiers. During one moment of Treyarch's

COD3 gameplay presentation, the player was stalking through the doorway of some war-torn ruins when he was surprised from the side by an unarmed enemy. The enemy grabbed at the player's rifle and a tussle began during which the player had to rapidly tap the shoulder buttons to try and wrestle the weapon from the filthy Kraut's grasp. Eventually the player broke free, used the right thumbstick to kick the enemy onto his haunches, lined him up in his sights and put a bullet right between his eyes, all in the one fluid combination of controls. The 'weapon wrestling' controls appear to be quite impressive as they are, but they could possibly get a lot better thanks to the ingenious PS3 controller (see 'EMOTION SENSING').

SYMPHONY OF DESTRUCTION

Another aspect of COD3 that Treyarch is implementing to heighten the sense of realism is the destructible environment system. The COD3 demonstration opened

with a view looking out the back of a soldier transport truck. Behind the truck, a tardy soldier was desperately trying to catch up to the convoy on foot. Just as he was about to reach the truck and get hoisted up into the back by his comrades he was gone, a victim of a landmine placed in the centre of the road. The camera was rocked by a powerful explosion and rain of rubble, and the smoke soon cleared to reveal a smouldering crater in the earth where the soldier had been.

Later we witnessed a gunfight in a cemetery, with tombstones fragmenting under heavy machine gun fire as the Allied troops scrambled frantically up the hillside in an effort to overcome the Germans. One of the Allies unloaded a full clip into a German fighter plane flying overhead, perforating its engine and forcing it to spiral out of control and into a nearby church, cleaving its way right through the steeple and collapsing into a spectacular ball of flaming rubble and twisted fuselage that leapt off the screen and very nearly singed our eyebrows off. At the very least our faces were certainly more tanned than beforehand.

The destruction isn't just eye candy, either. If an enemy takes cover behind a wooden fence, you can now machinegun the palings into a pile of splintered toothpicks and force the enemy to seek a different refuge (or just take him out amidst his frenzied dash). if you've got the firepower you can even knock entire buildings down and bury groups of enemies, Black-style. One of the objectives demonstrated to us involved climbing aboard a Sherman M4 tank with a pair of binoculars and using them to spot enemies hiding in a nearby base. The tank's gunner would then blast swimming pool-sized holes in the walls, exposing the enemies within (well, those that managed to survive the severe impact of the tank shells, anyway).

DAMAGING EFFECTS

If there was an award for the most impressive explosions yet seen in a videogame, then COD3 would be unfolding its acceptance speech and walking onto the stage in order to grab the gold statuette. You think the opening Pearl Harbour









The new 'Battle Actions' close guarters combat, such as when an enemy surprises you and attempts to wrest your rifle from your grasp, is currently handled by a combination of the face buttons and alternated tapping between and co, much like you would do in a classic Olympics sports game, in order to overcome your opponent. However, it is likely that the developers will incorporate the PS3 DualShock's motion sensors into the gameplay, leaving you to physically grapple with the controller as though it was your rifle and therefore immersing you more convincingly into the struggle on-screen.

sequence in Medal of Honor: Rising Sun was impressive? You think that the nonstop violent blasts of Black were exciting? The explosions in those games may as well have consisted of white pieces of canvas unfurling with "BANG!" printed on them for how convincing they are in comparison with the skull-shattering booms of Treyarch's new shooter.

So devoted to mind-blowing particle effects is the team behind COD3 that they've actually got an internal particle effect development team; whose sole responsibility is crafting the most convincing explosions, smoke and weather effects ever experienced within the confines of your lounge room (not our lounge room, though - our New Year's Eve parties tend to get way out of hand). in fact all aspects of the game's design have been intensified and taken up a notch; whereas COD2 was created by a team of 80 individuals, that number has doubled for the team behind COD3.

Lob a grenade into the second floor window of an enemy barracks and a few seconds later you're greeted with a blinding

flash of white, followed by orange flames that balloon outwards and subside, leaving black fingers of smoke to snake their way out of the window and towards the heavens amidst a shimmering haze of heat. So impressive is the technology behind the smoke that you can even fire a few rifle shots through the charcoal-coloured clouds, perforating them and leaving wisps of smoke to curl around the path in the air that the bullets have travelled. Wind will also have an effect on smoke, so you'il also have to take the wind's direction into account if you're going to use a smoke grenade to create some cover from some enemy snipers.

Treyarch is also incorporating displacement mapping into the COD3 engine. Whereas bump mapping is the technique widely used to make flat surfaces appear 3D, displacement mapping goes a step beyond by featuring bumpy surfaces with visibly raised edges that cast individual shadows, such as the individual bricks in a wall. The result is a photo realistic environment with an unprecedented level of detail - even

the puddles in battlefield trenches have believable depth and will realistically refract light; the COD3 artists are meticulous to say the least.

FOOT SOLDIERS

Traipsing through long grass and mud will leave trails of footprints, and you can even use footprints in order to track your enemies (or your enemies might use them to track you). Certainly the enemy Al is almost frighteningly realistic; the enemies in COD3 are so smart they make the soldiers in COD2 look like a pack of guntoting Paris Hiltons. Enemy troops really work as a team, announcing your presence when you're spotted and communicating with a variety of hand gestures in order to coordinate flanking manoeuvres and various other attacks. Likewise your Al comrades will point and notify each other when they spot a Jerry and constantly chatter to you about what to do next. All of the hand signais and attack patterns have been developed with the assistance of a real military expert (see 'ARMY INTELLIGENCE').

The Al is unpredictable, and the levels are non-linear. Each level is far longer than in COD2 thanks to the incorporation of a brand new streaming technology that allows for bigger maps with greater detail and a lot more going on. The levels also feature multiple paths, giving you the option of deciding how best to tackle the situation. Do you stick to the trenches and slog your way to victory, or take the high road on some rooftops and snipe your foes from relative safety? Thanks to these regular branches in COD3's storyline, the game is set to pack an unheard of amount of singleplayer replay value for a firstperson shooter.

Best of all, Call of Duty 3 is set to launch with the PlayStation 3 this November, and we've merely scratched the surface on the incredible work that Treyarch is putting into the technology behind it. If "War, what is it good for?" is the question then COD3 looks like it might well be the answer, shouted with all the aggression of a hard arse drill sergeant intimidating enough to make you drop and give him twenty.

HOW-IT HOPENCU! THE NORWANDY BREAKOUT

he dramatic events of D-Day, June 6th, 1944, were just the beginning of a ten-week campaign. Inland from the beaches at Normandy were knotted hedgerows, called bocage, that were ten to fifteen feet high and impossible to cut through. The Allies and the Germans moved off the beaches and into the bocage, fighting hedgerow by hedgerow. Allied and German units would often get lost and stumble upon each other, and there was no way over or through them to escape. The Allied invasion was in danger of stagnation.

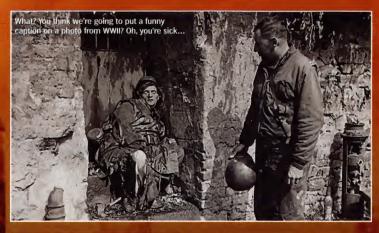
Advances were reliant almost entirely

Advances were reliant almost entirely upon the use of high explosives, but as the Allied stock dwindled, it was realised that blasting through all of the hedgerows would not be an option. The Americans took some anti-invasion obstacles, made out of tough railroad ties, and cut them into cowcatchers for their tanks. Digging into the thick root structure with their tanks, the Americans were finally able to make some progress.

The British were ordered to take Caen. Soon the city had the dublous distinction of being the most bombed French city in the war, but in armoured attacks at Villers-Bocage on June 13 and on Caen itself on June 25-29, the British made no progress in breaking out of the Cotentin Peninsula and moving inland.

The Americans grew tired of waiting and in the meantime were clearing the city of Cherbourg of German defenders. As a major port, Hitler ordered his men to fight to the death, but by June 28 the last pocket of resistance was cleared and the port facilities began to be repaired.

Meanwhile, the German high Command was undergoing a serious crisis. The Wehrmacht Seventh Army Commander.





Dollman, committed suicide. Strafing on July 17 injured Erwin Rommel and he was out of action, replaced by Günther von Kluge. Three days later both Rommel and von Kluge had also committed suicide.

But the stagnation still characterized the Normandy front. On July 17-19, large numbers of British tanks tried again to take Caen and



breakout, but they were again repelied.

The Americans were winning a protracted battle of attrition to the south. With most of the German armour concentrated around the Goodwind operation, the newly created US Third Army under General George S. Patton landed in France and began to make a flank attack

around the German lines. He drove into Brittany and threatened to encircle the Germans from the rear. Hitler tried to use the American flank attack to create one of his own, but the Americans were able to intercept his plans and the Germans ran into heavy barriers of antitank guns. Stopped in their tracks, Operation Lüttich began on August 7 and was over quickly.

Stopped in their tracks, Operation Luttich began on August 7 and was over quickly. On August 16, Hitler ordered a German retreat and it was carried out with great skill, despite the blown bridges and shattered roadways. Since the Allies had command of the air, movement was often by night. 250,000 men, with little equipment, got across the Seine. But almost as many were caught near the town of Falaise.

As the American and British spearheads moved towards a linkup, the Germans smashed through the lines of the tough Polish 1st Division and were harassed by fighter-bombers firing rockets. 50,000 Germans were killed and 200,000 were captured. When Elsenhower toured the battlefleid several days later, he was said to have remarked that a person could walk for a mile on German corpses.

On August 19, with the Germans In retreat and the Allies still miles away, the communist-led Paris Resistance rose up and attacked the German garrison. The Free French forces declared their intention to break off and attack the city with or without the Allies, who favoured a broad front strategy through Europe.

front strategy through Europe.
The battle in Normandy was over;
Parls was about to be liberated and by
September 1944 almost all of France
would be free of German occupation.

MAKING TRACKS





Panzer Tank

Panzer Is a German noun that means 'armour'. Panzer Is also an abbreviation of Panzerkampfwagen, which means 'armoured combat vehicle'. Panzer Tanks were used by the Germans in WWII, and by the end of the war the vehicle had endured eight different revisions, from the original Panzerkampfwagen I through to the extremely unreliable Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger II.

SdKfz Armoured Car

Known also as Leichter Panzerspähwagen, or 'Light Armoured Vehicle' the SdKfz consisted of a heavy car chassis with an angled armoured body and gun turret. The base model featured a single 7.92 machine gun, but there were also SdKfz armoured vehicles with auto cannons, armour piercing cannons and additional radio equipment.

Sherman M4A3 Tank

More than 50,000 Sherman M4 Tanks were manufactured by the United States for WWII. Sherman M4 Tanks were often augmented with 'after market' parts Including the buildozer blade for Sherman dozer tanks, Duplex Drive for 'swimming' Sherman tanks and R3 flame thrower for Zippo flame tanks. Now that's how you pimp your ride, military style.

Motorcycle with Sidecar

German troops used motorcycles with sidecars in WWil, manufactured by both BMW and Zundapp. Often the side wheel was also driven using a differential gear, in order to improve the vehicle's all-terrain ability. Sadly, nothing could be done to prevent the passenger from "looking like a little bitch".

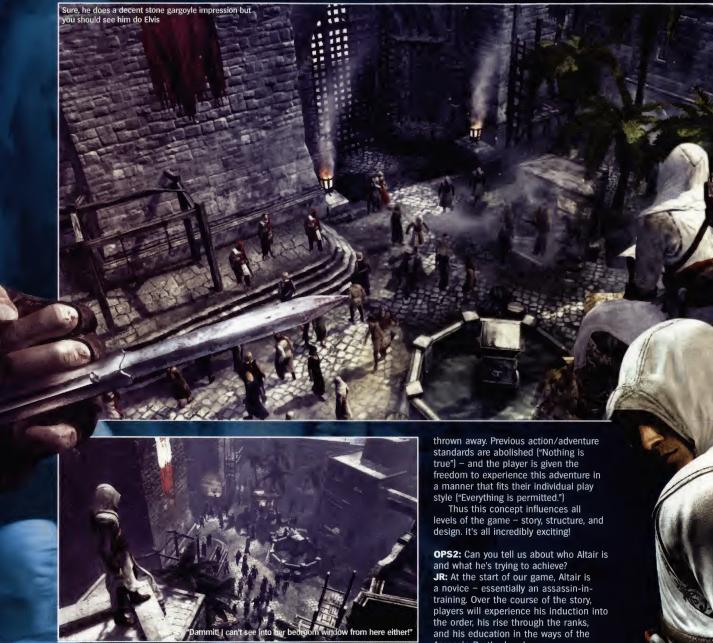
Dense fog creeps across an abandoned island, a siren sounds and the sea turns a deathly shade of red. Murderous demons have sensed your presence. To uncover the mysteries of this sinister island you will need to use Sight-jacking; an ability that allows you to see through your enemies' eyes. As these demons hunt you down, do you face the horror of your own death or outwit your enemies and bring the nightmare to an end? You decide.

SIREN2









ssassin's Creed sees you strapping on chainmail and a whopping great broadsword, assuming the role of Altair, an assassin for hire during the Third Crusade. The playground for this intriguing setting is an entire 12th century city filled with authentic architecture and bustling citizens. Most impressively when exploring this environment you'll find that the Ai awareness and interactivity levels are completely off the chart. We talked to Assassin's Creed producer, Jade Raymond, about her brave new world.

OPS2: How did you come up with the Idea for the game?

JR: Key members of our creative team read a book about the Assassins and then started to do a lot of research about the clan and the third crusade. The more we discovered about these people, the more we wanted to make the game. Even the Assassin moto, "Nothing is true, everything is permitted" fits the game medium perfectly. We developed our main character, Altair, as a forward thinking missionary of sorts, on a mission

to end the Third Crusade.

OPS2: The "Nothing is true, everything is permitted" concept is intriguing. Can you tell us more about this?

JR: The phrase itself defines the

Assassins. On the surface, it seems to be a license to spread chaos and anarchy. But such an interpretation represents a failure to properly internalise the principles of the brotherhood. Beneath this seemingly simple creed, are a series of important tenets which provide a proper context for understanding its true meaning.

The Assassins function much like a Greek mystery cult with knowledge and information being given to members only as they move through the organisation's ranks. To understand the true meaning of this phrase, you'll have to play the game - and gain Assassin knowledge alongside Altair. To say more would be to give away some rather exciting plot twists and betray the Assassins' secrets!

You can also apply the creed to the game itself - traditional game design rules that enforce linear level design and restricted gameplay are being

Assassin Brotherhood.

His full name is Altair Ibn'La-Ahad, which roughly translates into "Altair, Son of None." Orphaned as a child, he was taken in by the Assassin's and raised amongst them.

First and foremost, he has been commissioned to end the Third Crusade. To do so, he must seek out those responsible for leading and exacerbating the conflict. The targeted murder of immoral individuals is his primary method of achieving his goal. Along the way he will discover that the Crusades themselves are simply a cover for a much larger conflict - one in which he will play a pivotal role.

There's a lot to be discovered about our hero over the course of the game. What does it really mean to be called the "Son of None?" Why do many of his enemies and allies seem to know more about him than he does? Why are they reluctant to share this information with him? Will he find the courage to conquer his personal demons and overcome his character weaknesses?

OPS2: How is combat handled within the game?

UGUST |PlayStation 2 | 59

JR: in line with the rest of the game, the driving factor for our fighting system is realism. We did not want our characters to be able to take a big sword hit in the face and keep running like nothing happened. This helped us define a fight where players are trying to find and create openings in their opponent's defence while not giving away openings of his own. We can't talk about details much yet, but needless to say this creates tensed and highly explosive combats based on observation and proper timing rather then memorizing long strings of combos.

OPS2: We've seen Altair sneak through the crowd and go for a quick assassination. Can you tell us about other types of assassinations he will perform?

JR: Assassin's Creed is an open world game ruled by emergent systems like physics and Al. As such. there are tonnes of different and

clever ways to kill someone depending on the situation. For example, try pushing a heavy object on his head, use some range combat, or even scare him into fleeing in a dark alley where you can finish him without as many witnesses. However, historically the Assassins' way of killing their target was in front of the largest crowd possible while making the least collateral damage possible, and

JR: Two years ago it was one of the most exciting and challenging things about this project since we didn't know much about the PS3 technology back then, so we were designing a little bit blindly. Now that we have more information we know that our intuitions we're not far off. There is no doubt in our minds that Assassin's Creed will deliver a true next-gen gaming

experience not only on a graphical

We're working hard to prevent moments where improper design breaks the fourth wall.

we're rewarding the player for doing so.

OPS2: Do disguises or other weapons besides Altair's sword and bow come into play?

JR: Yes, of course. But we can't talk about them yet.

OPS2: What has it been like developing for the PS3?

standpoint but also gameplay-wise.

OPS2: What was it about the 12th century Crusades that made you want to design a game in that period? JR: I think it's safe to say that the Crusades are an area we've wanted to explore for a long time, but we've been waiting for technology to reach a point where we can do it justice. It's not enough

for us to simply set the game here - we needed to capture the experience of living during this tumultuous time: The fusion of European and Middle Eastern art and architecture. The hustle and bustle of medieval city life. The intrigue and political machinations of regional leaders. The gritty nature of ancient combat. The air of mystery that surrounds the secret societies that rose to power around this time.

OPS2: The city in Assassin's Creed has been described as a non-restrictive map. What are the sorts of restrictions you have found frustrating in current games and how did you overcome them with this game? JR: We hate arbitrary and iliogical bottlenecks in games. How often have you bumped up against an invisible wall? Or how often have you been stuck on an obstacle and wished there was an alternate way to deal with it in order to proceed? We're working hard to prevent moments where improper design breaks the fourth wall. If we couldn't remove restrictions from the game, we at least wanted to be able to justify them - so that the player says "that makes sense in the context of this game's world"

OPS2: Ai has been lagging behind the





People Power

As well as reacting to you with believably human awareness, members of the crowd will also remember how you've treated them in the past and act accordingly. When you're on the run from a group of soldlers the crowd can react in a number of ways. If you've wronged them in the past then they're likely to scatter when they see you coming and point out the direction you went to the soldiers chasing you. On the other hand if you've helped crowd members beforehand then they wiii help crowd around you and hide your presence as the guards approach, allowing you to slip away undetected





believability of the visuals for a while now. Can you give us some details about the Ai in Assassin's Creed and how believably it will react to Altair in different situations? JR: We have started with the concept that the player should have full control over the Assassin's body and that the Assassin should be able to interact with the world in an intuitive and natural way. You have fine control of the way you

Interact with the crowds in the street as well as all of the elements in your surroundings. The new gameplay comes from how the living and breathing world reacts to your second-to-second actions. The need for artificial puzzle elements like moving walls or fire traps disappears because for the first time we can base our gameplay on social rules and the natural traps found in real cities.

OPS2: How will the gameplay change when Altair is out of the city environment in the surrounding countryside? JR: if the city can feel dense and stressful due to sheer amount of people, the kingdom is a synonym of pure freedom. With vast open fields to ride through, natural cliffs to climb or various pilgrims to protect from the bandits, we feel the

countryside of the kingdom offers a great break in the pace of the game. Even if Altair remains the same, the change of environment lets the player experience the game in a different and refreshing way.

OPS2: We've seen the clergy members helping Altair because he's treated them well previously. Can you give us some other examples of how Altair's previous

of warriors Altair belongs to), which were seen as a neutral third-party in the conflict. Helping these people always helps your standing toward them and they'll then be enticed to help you when they see you in trouble. Without going too far into details, other groups could include lepers, persecuted scholars or simple poor men

forced into thievery in order to survive.

Place a highly mobile & skilled Assassin in a fully interactive living environment and the possibilities are endless.

actions will cause the citizens to react to him differently later in the game? JR: There are various groups of people who can switch their allegiance like this. Medieval warfare was never an easy thing, but the Third Crusade was especially hard on the population, both on the Muslim and Christian side. As such, sometimes people felt they had no choice but to seek the help of the Hashishin (the group

OPS2: Almost everything in the game appears to be climbable. Other than evading soldiers, are there other reasons to explore the city in this way? JR: Actually carefully climbing a vertical surface is not the player's best choice when he's being chased. Climbing is best used when trying to carefully approach certain points which may be hard to reach otherwise. The middle-eastern city roofline was buzzing with life; people often used their roof as an extension of their house for storage, and went as far as building small bridges to connect with their neighbours. As such, tonnes of gameplay happens on the roofline level of the city, from meeting people to finding items, or just getting a nice vantage point to drop on your prey when he passes by!

We really want any architectural detail that sticks out more than two inches to be used as a potential hold for your hands or feet. Not only can you create your own path on the rooftops, you can also create your own flashy or subtle style or skip the roofs entirely and use a strategy through the crowd.

Place a highly mobile and skilled Assassin in a fully interactive living environment and the possibilities really are endless. -







Hlternate Reality

When we saw the game demonstrated at E3 the graphics broke up into digital lines at the end of the demo (see picture). We initially thought this was just some tricky effect for the presentation but then things took a hard right turn out of Normal Gamesville and took us, and our dislocated jaw, into Bizarro Alternate Reality. As the digital lines continue to break up we see the Image shift from a third-person view behind Altair and change to the perspective of someone sitting in a chair. As the view clears we can see that the character is in a room full of computer monitors, looking up at a lady wearing a futuristic headset. On one of the screens we can see the words memory retrieval. Exactly what this means is unclear. The only comment Ubisoft will make about it is that this plot twist doesn't involve time travelling. We know one thing for sure: finding out how this guy in the future has memories of being an assassin in the Third Crusades will be a lot of fun, and definitely paves the way for some amazing plot twists and settings in Assassin's Creed and future titles in the series.



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INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

Play-test





WELCOME

The arrival of Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories on PS2 may not mean much to all you PSP owners out there, but don't forget there are plenty of people who haven't already played It. lt's no San Andreas, but it's still GTA - and for half the cost of a regular new release! When we

were done in Liberty City we kicked back to watch Paul crap his pants over AFL Premiership 2006 and kick some balls in Forbidden Siren 2. Or was that the other way around?

LUKE REILLY **REVIEWS EDITOR**

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE'S reviews are the best in the business. Our squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone. And we love what we do.

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REVIEW RATINGS

Here's what our review scores stand for:

Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change 10/10

the face of gaming forever

A truly astonishing game. If you have a 09/10

PlayStation 2, you need this now

08/10 Highly recommended

Good, solid fare that's well worth a look 07/10

05/10 Better than average, and acceptable for hardcore

fans of the genre An average game

05/10 Poor, but still with the odd moment 04/10

03/10 Extremely disappointing

02/10 To be avoided

01/10 Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing, so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.



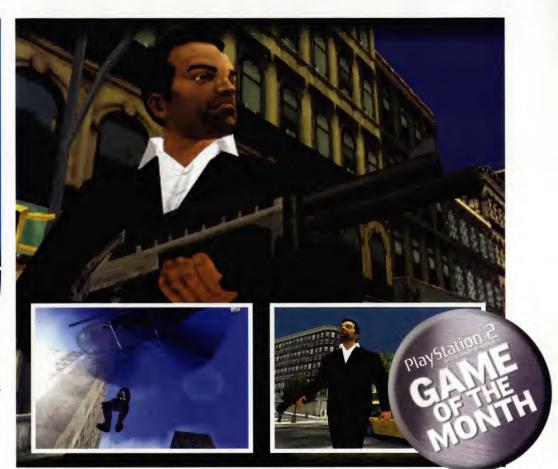




receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this



is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100%



GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES 64

Return to the city that started a revolution!



OPERATION WINBACK 2: PROJECT POSEIDON

Fit for the god himself or destined for the bottom of the ocean?



FORBIDDEN SIREN 2 We can hear it wailing!

70 CARS

Burnout for kids!



67 AFL PREMIERSHIP 2006

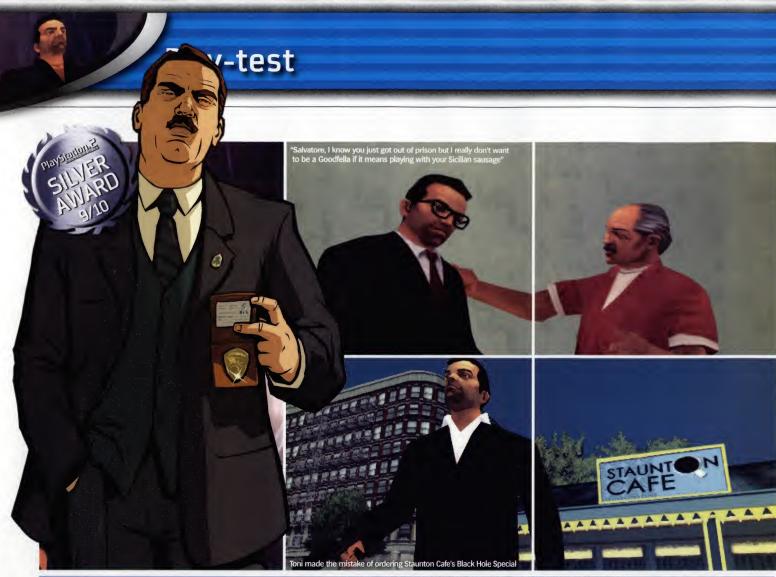


71 MICRO MACHINES V4

72

68

Micro-sized, maxi-fun!



ADVENTURE

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BACK STORY

The GTA series is the biggest gaming phenomenon in history, grossing more dollars than there are people on this planet. The free roaming, 'play it any way you want' crime saga has inspired many pretenders but no other developer has yet managed to match Rockstar's epics.

X LAB TEST

BETTER THAN GTAIII

WORSE THAN GTA: Vice City

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME Almost perfect port of LCS

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

Add multiplayer, swimming, flying vehicles

ockstar's chart-topping PSP game Liberty City Stories is now available for PS2. Wait a moment. A PSP port on PS2? Wasn't that supposed to be a one-way street going the other way? PSP games are just supposed to be cut-down ports of their big brothers on PS2, right? That's definitely the belief among some of the publishers. Yes, EA, we're looking right at you. Thankfully for us, there are also developers like Rockstar that are prepared to put a blt of extra effort in and make PSP games that actually surpass the quality of some of the best games on PS2. While it would be pointless to port any of EA's watered down PSP games back to PS2, Liberty City Stories still stands tall amongst recent PS2 games and is more than worth a look on the home console. While we're talking about PSP ports, Sony, if you could bang out a PS2 version of Pursult Force we sure would appreciate it. Those motorcycleto-car flying jump car-jackings just never

RETURN TO LIBERTY

As the name suggests, Liberty City Stories sees the Grand Theft Auto series return to arguably its most loved setting, the New York-inspired Liberty City from GTAIII. Gone is the nameless tall, dark and silent star of GTAIII and in his place is the gruff mafia man, Toni Cipriani (who you may remember was the mid-level Leone goon you did a few jobs for in GTAIII). Liberty City Stories is set three years before GTAIII at a time when Toni has fallen out of favour with the Leone family, which conveniently explains why he must work his way up through the city's criminal empire in typical GTA-style.

The earlier time period keeps the city feeling familiar enough, without being too repetitive. Some characters and locations are identical in this time period, like mob boss Salvatore and his cliff-side mansion, but other citizens like the seedy, obese strip club owner JD O'Tool have never been seen before. Some locations, like the

brothel in Hepburn Heights and the casino in St Marks, no longer exist in *GTAIII*'s future setting.

As well as the time period changes, there are a number of new gameplay additions that make LCS a much more compelling adventure than GTAIII. With the exception of GTAIII's one flying vehicle (the wingless Dodo plane – which is still disappointingly absent in the PS2 version) LCS recreates every inch of pavement and every ounce of gameplay that made the original such a classic.

Recreating the look and feel of *GTAIII* Is one thing, but Rockstar knew that it would need more to make *LCS* compelling. To that end a wealth of new features have been crammed into the game. Being able to cruise around Liberty City on motorcycles is the most immediately obvious change (see 'EASY RIDERS').

Others improvements, like being able to shoot tyres, snipe enemles through windscreens and ball from moving vehicles may take a little longer to notice but are













no less appreciated.

As great as GTAIII was, its missions were more than a little repetitive. It's in LCS' much improved variety that its greatest strength lies. The main missions spice up the traditional car chase missions with stuff like machine-gunning out the back of racing speedboats, killing bodyguards and assuming their identity, photographing sickos and storming into heavily fortified enemy gang locations. While it may not approach the staggering variety of San Andreas, Liberty City Stories is much more on par with Vice City in terms of mission types and gameplay.

GROWING UP

Although there was never much doubt, Liberty City Stories has survived the conversion from PSP to PS2 remarkably well. Visually the game is absolutely identical. Draw distance, 3D models and textures are all inseparable from the PSP version.

Rockstar did an amazing job of compressing the GTA controls onto the PSP but there's no surprise that the return to the DualShock's twin sticks and

and D buttons improve the controls noticeably over its baby brother. The greater dexterity of the DualShock's stick removes the need to switch between the PSP's two alming speeds while firing guns from the first-person perspective. The @ and 10 buttons also simplify the PSP drive-by controls and return them to the familiar standard. The biggest advancement for the PS2 version is the return of San Andreas' camera controls. You can now use the right analogue stick to spin the camera in any direction while walking or driving.

As a sign of just how complete the conversion is, a couple of the PSP version's bizarre quirks also remain in the PS2 game. Although you can shoot people through windscreens with all your guns, nothing but the sniper rifle can pop tyres. You can stand there unloading Uzi or machine gun bullets into tyres all day without puncturing a single one. But then if you hop on a motorcycle and use that same Uzi to do drive by shootings at other cars then it can blast out tyres. Weird. The Rockstar testing department must have been hungover that day.

Another slightly disappointing leftover from the

EASY RIDERS

used to cruise around Liberty City. There's the painfuily slow Vespa that's good for delivering food in bonus missions and nothing else really. The dirtbike is great for offroad fun but also handies well on the streets. The Harley Davidson feels decidedly cool to crulse around on but corners with all the precision of an Ice skater using pork chops for boots. The undisputed king of LCS' motorcycles is the sports bike (pictured below), boasting tight handling and unrivalled speed. Weaving through traffic at top speeds without grating half of Tony's face off after a 50m

















VICE CITY STORIES

GTAIV may be more than a year away but the good news is we only have to wait until October this year for the next PSP GTA game, Vice City Stories. Rockstar has yet to confirm any concrete details about the game but you can count on finally being able to take to the skies with the range of helicopters and planes featured In Vice City. Hell, maybe Rockstar will even let us have a crack at Son Andreas' jetpack this time. If the plot follows Liberty City Stories' lead and casts you in the roll of one of Vice City's other characters then Diaz, the drug lord you dethroned halfway through the game would be the obvious lead for VCS. Check back for the first VCS preview in an issue or two





X OFFICIAL VERDICT

PSP-perfect but hardly cutting edge Good tunes and hilarious comments GAMEPLAY GTA, just the way we like it LIFESPAN Staggering number of things to do

Absolutely essential gaming for the 1.5 million PS2-owning Aussies who haven't picked up a PSP yet.



PSP version is that LCS still keeps your feet nailed to the ground when you're precision aiming guns, as opposed to the superior twin stick shooting method in San Andreas that let you walk around while aiming guns. While it's a shame neither of these minor complaints were ironed out in the conversion process, it's only because we're anally

obsessed that we're even mentioning them (Paul's sister sure is a trooper in the bedroom to accommodate us though).

LOST IN TRANSLATION

While in every other sense Liberty City Stories is a pixel-perfect port of its PSP sibling, there is one glaring omission. Arguably LCS' most impressive feature its six-player Wi-Fi multiplayer mode - has been cut entirely

> For those who didn't get to play it, the multiplayer mode let you choose any of the three entire Islands as maps to use for elther deathmatches or team games, using all of GTA's trademark

> > weapons and

vehicles. Not only was this the first genuine multiplayer mode in a GTA game but it was also the first game ever to offer a multiplayer mode where players have free reign across an entire city.

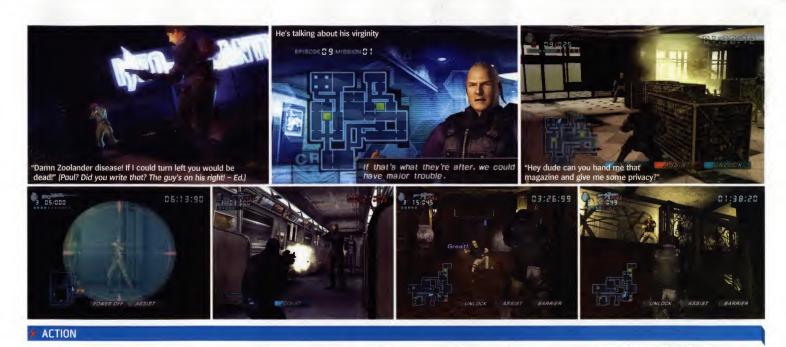
Rockstar's excuse for cutting the multiplayer mode was that PS2 LCS was not the right time to debut a fully-fledged multiplayer mode. Clearly Rockstar is waiting to do this in GTAIV. While we can see some logic in this, GTAIV is still more than a year away and we're sure we could have had a lot of fun playing LCS online until then.

CRUNCH TIME

The AWOL multiplayer mode is disappointing. And if we wanted to be greedy we'd also say it's a shame that some of San Andreas' other advances weren't included - like swimming, climbing fences and flying vehicles. While we're writing our Rockstar wishlist we may was well also mention that instead of this LCS port we would have preferred a San Andreas missions pack. Throw in a couple of new vehicles and 20-30 new missions set in some of the dozens of great locations that were never touched in the original San Andreas and you'd have an instant blockbuster.

We could keep going on about our GTA wishlist for another 20 pages but the bottom line is that Liberty City Stories is a great game that deserves to stand beside the rest of its GTA brothers on PS2. LCS takes us back to the city we know and love, with an adventure that surpasses GTAIII in every way, and very nearly matches all the advances made by Vice City. For \$50 Liberty City Stories is an Irresistible package. & Narayan Pattison





OPERATION WINBACK 2 PROJECT POSEIDON

A Poseidon adventure that sinks fast

DISTRIBUTOR: THO DEVELOPER: CAVIA PRICE: \$49.95 PLAYERS: 1-4 OUT: NOW WEB: www.koei.co.uk 60HZ MODE: YES WIDESCREEN: NO SURROUND SOUND: YES ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

The original Operation Winback was a pretty well received third-person shooter released for the Nintendo 64 in 1999. The game was then spruced up with better graphics and ported to the PS2 in 2001, and has populated bargain bins in game stores ever since.

peration Winback 2 has arguably one of the most exciting CGI intro sequences we've come across in a long time. it's brilliantly over-the-top; a female agent dangles from the back of a speeding subway train, her sub-machine gun spraying hot lead into the carriage, scattering shattered window glass and enemy bodies in all directions. Meanwhile another agent above ground takes a rocket launcher in each hand and aims them at a jumbo jet taxiing down a runway, pumping both rockets at once into the front and rear landing gear of the plane and leaving it to crumble Into a fiery wreckage skidding along the tarmac. Hell yes, we want to play that...

But it's roughly two or three seconds into the opening mission of the game that the disappointment sets In. It takes about this long for you to realise that Operation Winback 2 cannot and will not live up to the excitement generated by its breathtaking pre-title screen curtain raiser. It won't even get close. It's quite depressing, actually. It's a bit like getting a saucy striptease from Jessica Simpson, only to follow it with a half-hearted romp with the dumpy girl from accounts in the backseat of her Volkswagen - it's still sort of fun, but she's not much to look at and ultimately you just want to get it over with.

In its defence, Winback 2 does play slightly differently to other games in the genre as each mission is actually tackled twice by two separate characters. For example, as the first character you might activate a switch to open a locked

door and then get pinned down by some guards. then as the second character you'll run through that unlocked door and machine gun the guards in order to save your team mate. It feels a bit like an actor acting out his scene in front of a blue screen, to be added to the rest of the cast later (the George Lucas method of movie making).

This style of playing the same events through the eyes of multiple characters was certainly executed far more interestingly in last year's Without Warning from Circle Studio, but it's not the only area in which Winback 2 doesn't cut the mustard. The game is painfully linear, and holds your hand at all times (at one moment you'll get a message to "look for a hidden switch", before the game automatically faces you in the switch's direction). The lock-on targeting only works about 50 per cent of the time and the same button you use to open doors is also used to perform a diving roll and to shimmy along walls - which creates plenty of frustration when you're simply trying to exit a room.

And criminally, despite the fact that every mission in the game takes two characters working together to complete the tasks (in an albeit detached fashion), there's no co-op mode! There is multiplayer support for four-player split-screen, but it's clunky and uninspired deathmatching that will drive your friends away.

If you've got fond memories of the series then playing Winback 2 will be like going through your high school yearbook and realising the girl you lost your virginity to wasn't half as hot as you remembered. Horrible memories like that really don't require reliving. 4. Tristan Ogilvie

CRATE EXPECTATIONS

Stand in the open when you're in a gunflght with an enemy and you'll die pretty fast, so taking cover is a crucial element of the action in Operation Winback 2. Fortunately every environment in the game is littered with superfluous crates (phewl), but that's not the end of your problems thanks to the fact that the 'take cover' button is the same as the 'perform an elaborate diving roll' button. Jump headfirst into a hall of enemy bullets by accident? Get used to Itl



× OFFICIAL VERDICT		
GRAPHICS	04	Bland textures, horrible animation
SOUND	Ø3	Laughable dialogue
GAMEPLAY	04	Simple pointing and shooting
LIFESPAN	Ø3	Plenty of missions, all of them bad
H will make		went -

to 'winback' your money. Avoid.



LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

WORSE THAN

The bulk of third-person shooters

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME The intro sequence is awesome

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

Everything that happens after the Intro

SPORTS

AFL PREMIERSHIP 2006



Pure Aussie gold!

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY DEVELOPER: IRGURUS PRICE: \$79.95 PLAYERS: 1-4 OUT: JULY WEB: auxilaystation.com 60HZ MODE: NO WIDESCREEN; YES SURROUND SOUND: YES ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

There's only one place you can play AFL with all your footy heroes. Sony Computer Entertainment Australia and the AFL stitched up a deal earlier in the year so that PlayStation is the exclusive home of Aussie Rules football for the next two years. Booyah!

K LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

AFL Premiership 2005

WORSE THAN

Rugby League 2

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME
The animations are a lot more

realistic

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

Iron out the niggling bugs

orn to run is the theme for this year's AFL game on PS2 and it suits it perfectly. The last couple of AFL titles haven't run as well as they could have but AFL Premiership 2006 runs as well as Cathy Freeman in the 2000 Olympics.

While graphically the game hasn't received a major upgrade, IRGurus has put a lot of effort into making the players animations more realistic and it's paid off. Gone are the days when Barry Hall would stand like Frankenstein's monster and jump straight up into the air to take a mark. Now big Bazza will jump like Michael Jordan to reach for the ball or dive and roll like a real showman. It's not just marks that look impressive. Kicking, running and even pushing other players in the back all looks very natural and not stiff and robotic like the previous AFL titles. Even the goal celebrations have a bit more life to them and make you yell "Go you good thing!" when you score that six-pointer.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Taking a cue from some of the other sports titles out there, AFL Premiership 2006 features a mission mode where you'll be thrown into a sticky situation with one goal in mind; to win. The catch is that your team will usually be down and the action will pick up mid-game. For instance one of the St Kilda missions is to leave South Australia as the winners. You'll take on the Crows with the home team up 21-6 at the end of the first quarter. It's not as easy as you might think as the top teams, like the Crows, can dominate the game if you let them. The AI is now a lot more intelligent, so much so that they will drop a shoulder into players who don't even have the ball, jump on your back to take the mark and even shrug off tackles a lot more than usual. You're really going to have to put in the hard yards this time around if you want to come away with a win.

This is most important in the career mode where you'll be the manager, coach and player. You'll kick off by selecting your

favourite team and then organise everything from player positions to attack and defensive strategies. Post game you'll receive experience points that can then be delegated to the players of your choice and you'll also have to deal with any tribunal disputes. The career mode is a lot more in-depth than before and is on par with the *Madden* and *Rugby League* games. But if you don't want to be one of the suits you can always jump straight into the Season mode, which is just the games. No more. No less. You can choose to play in the pre-season NAB Cup, the regular season, the playoffs or just tackle the whole lot.

THE GAME HAS CHANGED

Leading your team to victory will be easier thanks to the improvements IRGurus has made to the control setup. The biggest complaint about the previous AFL titles is that the controls have been too unresponsive. Previously when you hit **(a)** you'd have to wait an agonising moment before the player















would kick the ball, and that's only if he hadn't been pummelled to the ground first. Thankfully that's not the case in AFL Premiership 2006 as the response time is spot on. IRGurus has even tweaked the controls a little to make playing the game a much more fluid experience. When you're in sight of the goals, a diagram of the posts will appear at the bottom of the screen with a ball moving from left to right. Hold @ down when the bail is in between the posts and you'll get the six-pointer. But if you hold it down for too long then it will come off the side of your boot and you'll be left to look like a Jackass in front of the crowd. Special marks, or "Speccies" as they are known in the game, are also performed differently in 2006. You have to line up the timing circle and an orange circle to nab one of those classic catches. It can be a little tough to nail but when you do it you'll be heading straight to the replay option to watch your handiwork.

Sadly AFL Premiership 2006 is not all marvellous marks. One of the main problems is that you can't select which player you want to kick to. Your player will always kick to the teammate it thinks is the best choice based on the power of your kick. So even if you aim to the left of the field your player

will automatically decide that the better option would be to kick it to the guy on the opposite side of the field. There are also a few glitches and collision detection problems including the infamous pom-poms waving over the barricades, which has featured in the last few AFL games, but this only happens occasionally.

AFL Premiership 2006 is a big improvement over 2005 but there's still a lot of work that needs to be done on the series - especially in the visual department. We know the PS2 is capable of so much more - Rugby League 2 and Rugby 06 are both vastly better looking games - and we'd like to the see the same quality for Australia's favourite footy code. However, AFL Premiership 2006 is still a lot more fun to play than the previous games in the series. IRGurus has kicked a lot of goals with this year's effort, and if you love footy then you really need this. - Paul Frew



Back again is the ability to throw your face onto your created AFL star. Using Digimask technology, you line up your face with the Interface on-screen and select certain points to capture. The technology has improved since 2005

so you'll be looking hotter than ever when you punch through the glant banner on your way to the field.



X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS 26

07 SOUND Commentary is a lot better this time around

MA GAMEPI AY More responsive and a lot simpler to play 28 Plenty of modes plus bonus missio LIFESPAN

Improving on the gameplay and adding new exciting modes, the AFL Premiership series has kicked another goal on the PS2.















Play-test















ADVENTURE

FORBIDDEN SIREN 2

It's scary alright

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY DEVELOPER: SCEJ PRICE: \$79.95 PLAYERS: 1 OUT: NOW WEB: www.playstation.com.au 60HZ MODE: NO WIDESCREEN: NO SURROUND SOUND: YES ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

While Forbidden Siren 2 is a little bit of a letdown, Sony Computer Entertainment Japan has mined some PlayStation gold in its time Including ICO, Everybody's Golf and the recent masterpiece, Shadow of the Colossus.

hen the first mission in a game is to simply run down a set of stairs then you know it's probably not going to blow your skirt up like a GTA or Resident Evil 4. Sadly this is your first encounter in Forbidden Siren 2.

Forbidden Siren 2 is the story of several characters that have been washed ashore a mysterious island. It's mysterious because 29 years earlier all of the island's inhabitants disappeared. Eventually the siren wails, the inhabitants return and all hell breaks loose. So it's all about survival, kind of like Lost but making even less sense.

Like Lost, Forbidden Siren 2 doesn't revolve around just one character. There are a variety of personalities including a 50 year old police officer, a novelist, a soldier and even a sweet little Japanese girl, and she sure does look innocent. While playing with several characters can be a lot of fun, it can also be a little hard to keep up with the story. This is because after every mission you'll jump back to a menu that looks like a spreadsheet. From here you select your next mission and have to confirm that you do want to keep playing. We've never seen a survival-horror game try to pull anything like this and we know why because it doesn't really work. The menu system stops the story from flowing and interrupts the eerie atmosphere the game is trying to create.

When you are in gameplay and watching the cut-scenes, you are guaranteed to feel uneasy. The characters are probably the most human-looking characters we've ever seen and with

Silent Hill's directors at the helm it's the most uneasy we've ever felt in a game. Forbidden Siren 2 doesn't go for shock scares where something jumps out at you. Instead you'll feel creeped out as you see your enemies grunt and groan as they hunt for something to munch on. In an abandoned trainyard, there were five or six zombie-like enemies covered in blood, looking for some fresh meat. We were controlling a student and had to guide a young girl through the vard without getting busted. Normally we would sneak up behind an enemy and knock them off but we only had a stick and couldn't really defend ourselves. You'll feel helpless and vulnerable with most of the characters in Forbidden Siren 2 but there are few soldiers who are packing heat so you will be able to get trigger happy in a few missions.

Unfortunately there are a few other niggling problems that leave Forbidden Siren 2 feeling less polished than it should. To name just a few; the subtitles do not match up, there's no way to aim when you're trying to shoot enemles and the only way to reload a weapon is to select it from a menu. These issues make Forbidden Siren 2 more difficult to play and therefore more difficult to enjoy.

Forbidden Siren 2 resembles some of the scariest Japanese horror flicks and oozes an uneasy atmosphere unlike any other survival horror game. It's just a shame there are too many niggling issues to make it enjoyable to play. The series has a lot of potential, we just hope SCEJ can give it some more polish if it comes to PS3.
Paul Frew

JACK OFF

Forbidden Siren's trademark sight-jack is back. Sight-jack allows you to see through your enemy's eyes in a first-person view so you know when it's safe to sneak past them. You tune in the enemy's view, kind of like you would a TV channel. There are several views so when you've got the frequency you want you can map it to a face button. Then once they're all tuned in you can swap enemies like changing channels on a TV.



GRAPHICS	09	VERDICT Stunning cut-scenes and models	
SOUND	2 8	Unsettling SFX and creepy music	
GAMEPLAY	Ø5	Too many niggling problems	
LIFESPAN	Ø 6	No Incentive to play through twice	
Plenty of scares but plenty of problems too. Only for diehard survival-horror lunkies.			

LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

Forbidden Siren

WORSE THAN Resident Evil 4

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME
The characters look great

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

The control system doesn't work

ALSO COMING TO PSP!

RACING/ADVENTURE

CARS

On the right track?

DISTRIBUTOR: THO DEVELOPER: RAINBOW STUDIOS PRICE: \$79.95 PLAYERS: 1 OUT: NOW WEB: www.carsvideogame.com 60HZ MODE: NO WIDESCREEN: NO SURROUND SOUND: NO NUMBER OF SOUND SOUND: NO NUMBER OF SOUND SOUND: NO WIDESCREEN: NO SURROUND SOUND: NO NUMBER OF SOUND SOUND: NO WIDESCREEN: NO NUMBER OF SOUND SOUND: NO NUMBER OF SOUND SOUND SOUND: NO NUMBER OF SOUND SOUN

BACK STORY

Rainbow Studios has had a decent run at the racing genre. Producing quality titles such as the ATV Offroad Fury and MX Unleashed series. It's great to see developers bringing a little substance and depth to licensed games, a genre in desperate need of a tune up.

LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

Crash Tag Team Racing

WORSE THAN

Simpson's Hit and Run

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

Racing fun for all ages

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

More challenges to appeal to older gamers

ell, it's that time of year again. The US Summer movie blockbusters are upon us, as Pixar and Dreamworks duke it out at the box office for the title of biggest animated film of the year. You all know what that means, a horde of licensed games trying to cash in on the hype and make a quick buck. Rarely does this result in a quality game, as most are rushed to be completed for a simultaneous release with the film. More often than not, this leads to an average and disappointing effort. Does Cars kick it into high gear, or is it ready for the scrap yard?

The first thing you'll be pleasantly surprised about is there are 10 playable cars from the movie and each cast member has reprised their role for voice overs, which is a cool change from the usual B-grade imitators featured in similar titles. From the get go, this feels like the movie as you take control of Lightning McQueen and some of his friends, as you free wheel your way around Radiator Springs. The game play, in the story mode, is reminiscent of Simpson's Hit and Run with the obvious difference that you cannot leave your vehicle, as you are the vehicle. Most of the missions involve a race, grand prix, a hunt for missing items or several mini-games. Our favourite of these was "Tractor Tipping", Just like cow tipping but, as the name implies, you knock over tractors. This is done stealthily, under the cloak of night by beeping your horn as you drive past, startling them from their slumber, all the while avoiding searchlights and patrolling trucks.

As you'd expect the main element of the game is racing. The cars handle a little awkwardly at first; they're not quite as responsive as we'd like. This is no Burnout or Need for Speed. The controls are a mixed bag, If you just tap the left analogue, your car goes a bit skittish, however when you're cornering it doesn't quite give you the angles that you'd like. When cornering you press on to powerslide, or drift around comers. We found that it was a little slow off the mark, and you almost have to pre-empt your turns. We would have like to have seen a little more polish added to the controls in general, however with a little practice you'll be burning around the track like a champion.

Being an all ages game, experienced gamers will have a great time working their way through the game with little difficulty, even on the hardest setting. However, the game has so faithfully recreated the world and wholesome spirit of the movie that it appeals to the young, or the young at heart. Youngsters will enjoy interacting with their favourite characters from the movie, as well as exploring the town between missions. Older gamers will not feel the adrenaline charged intensity they have come to expect from racing games, yet will find the story engaging and the gameplay fun rather than heart attack inducing.

Try to think of Cars as Burnout on Valium. It's got everything you know and love to get yer motor running, great looking cars, steady competition, drifting aplenty, but all a little on the chilled out side. Just sit back, relax and enjoy the ride. & Dave Kozicki

WINNER'S CIRCLE

Pixar never does anything by half measures. With any animated feature you know there's going to be a wealth of talented voices at its disposal. Cars the videogame is no different. Owen Wilson leads the pack as Nascar champion Lightning McQueen, ably supported by Paul Newman, Tony Shalhoub, John Ratzenberger and cult favourite Cheech Marin. Cheech plays Ramone, a hotted up, purple 1959 Impala, complete with red-hot flame graphics and phat-ass chrome rims, who owns a custom paint and body shop. Hit the hydraulics and make it



X OFFICIAL VERDICT

Ø8

. OTTICINE VERBICI		
GRAPHICS	07	Almost as good
SOUND	Ø8	Classic road tur
GAMEPLAY	07	Fun and simple

Finally, a licensed movie game for kids with some entertaining grunt under the hood

LIFESPAN



s the movie

John Lassiter, the director of the movie, has had great success with animated features. He was also behind A Bug's Life and both Toy Story films.















Play-test

Micro Machines V4 features 750 vehicles. That's about as many as GT4 has. Unfortunately, once you discount the five colours of each model the figure is significantly less.















MICRO MACHINES V4

Mash it up with some pocket-sized petrol heads!

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI DEVELOPER: SUPERSONIC PRICE: \$69.95 PLAYERS: 1-4 OUT: NOW WEB: www.atari.com.au 60HZ MODE: NO WIDESCREEN: YES SURROUND SOUND: YES ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

The Micro Machines videogame series has been kicking ground for about 15 years now on just about every system under the sun. Since it's debut in 1991 the Micro Machines series has spanned PC, NES, SNES, Sega Game Gear, Sega Genesis, Sega Master System, Game Boy. Game Boy Colour, PlayStation, Nintendo 64, Xbox, GameCube and of course, PS2. In other words, the Micro Machines series is a little bit like Paul's slster - everyone's had a go at some stage or another.

LAB TEST

BETTER THAN Mashed

WORSE THAN

Er... V8 Supercars 3

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME Fantastic track design, great multiplayer

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

Al is a little goofy, slight camera foibles

hey say a car is an extension of your manhood. Whoever they are, they're probably right. Cars certainly share plenty in common with todgers - they're throbbing, well-maintained, tend to get us into trouble a bit and the flashier they are the more women dig them. Looking at one's car as some sort of phallic extension isn't really a bad thing though - what man wouldn't want a two-ton, chrome penis? However, where does that leave Micro Machines? Surely you'd have to be hung like a rogue elephant to warrant getting around in one of these? Nope, because even though they're only an inch and half long they're plenty of fun - and isn't that the main thing?

Five minutes Into Micro Machines V4 and you'd be forgiven for thinking you're playing Mashed 2. Same top-down racing action. Same four-player madness. Same air-strike system for exacting instant revenge upon your giggling mates once you've crashed and burned. They're almost the same game. But when Mashed is one of the best party games around it's hardly a complaint.

Like Mashed, Micro Machines V4 is a four-player game at heart. All you need to do is insert a multitap, round up three friends and go nuts. If you're not familiar with the whole Mashed/Micro Machines gig - all four cars race on the same screen and any that can't keep up with the leader are eliminated. Simple. Races are a mad affair - when you're not trying to avoid being nudged off the edge of the kitchen bench you'll be struggling to

recover from the missile your mate just sent straight up your tailpipe.

There's not much to separate Mashed and Micro Machines V4 but the latter does have two strengths. Firstly the track design is absolutely inspired - from the kitchen to the bathroom, the beach to the garden and the butchery to the supermarket, V4 easily trumps Mashed in the circuit department. Not only are they more colourful, detailed and engaging than the fairly generic ones in Mashed, but also there are more of them and they're infinitely more hazardous. Each track Is fraught with race-ending ledges and unsympathetic obstacles to make the going tough. You'll need to avoid everything from kitchen hotplates, pecking chickens, jackhammers, model train sets, overflowing baths, snapping crabs and all manner of other devious traps.

Secondly, V4 has a far more robust singleplayer experience. It isn't a patch on the four-player mayhem but it certainly helps. A nifty track editor will also keep you occupied between multiplayer sessions.

By no means is V4 the best racer on PS2. The Ai is pretty sloppy (even on hard), being in front is sometimes a distinct disadvantage (you can't see upcoming corners) the weapons are a little ineffective and it Isn't exactly deep. However, if you want solid, wacky multiplayer racing in the vein of Mashed look no further. it's not the best kind of 'foreplay', but it's close (and much less tiring, Sorry, ladies). & Luke Reilly

THAT'S SUPER!

There's actually a very simple explanation regarding the similarities between Mashed and Micro Machines V4 - independent UK developer Supersonic is responsible for both of them. In fact, those of you with particularly keen memorles may recali Supersonic also developed Micro Machines 2 way back in 1995. The pint-sized penny racers have returned to their roots, and they're all the better for it.

Interestingly the last Micro Machines title on PS2 was simply called Micro Machines, but Micro Machines V4 is actually the true sequel to Micro Machines V3 - a game that appeared on the PSone way back in 1998.



GRAPHICS	Ø8	Great track detail	
SOUND	Ø5	Standard effects and muzak	
GAMEPLAY	09	Pure, unpretentious fun	
LIFESPAN	07	Limited, but multiplayer is great	

- but what's wrong

with that?

Play-test









ACTION

SHINOBIDO: WAY OF THE NINJA

Think Memento with a katana

DISTRIBUTOR: SPIKE DEVELOPER: ACQUIRE PRICE: \$79.95 PLAYERS: 1 OUT: JULY WEB: www.shinobido.com 60HZ MODE: NO WIDESCREEN: YES SURROUND SOUND: NO ONLINE: NO

hen you think of ninjas, most people envision a lone figure, cloaked by darkness, darting across rooftops, identity a mystery, sneaking quietly fulfilling some perilous task. They say the truest mark of a ninja is no one knowing you were ever there. The same could be said for *Shinobido: Way of the Ninja*. This gem slipped into the office with so little fanfare, it didn't just vanish from the radar, it was never even on it.

You begin with a blur and no idea of who you are. You stumble across a fragment of a purple gem, triggering a flashback to the moment your memory was ripped from you. Other fragments were scattered throughout the land and contain clues to how you

ended up in your present condition.

As you quest to regain your past you will become a prominent figure in a burgeoning war between three warlords. Each will offer you missions, and as you successfully complete each one, you will gain their trust and be compensated with money, weapons or memory gems. You may align yourself with any faction at any time and play one off against the other. It's the political aspect that gives you remarkable replay ability, as you can play most of the game's missions as attacker or protector.

With quick brutal kills, great controls, impressive rag doll physics and a clever storyline *Shinobido: Way of the Ninja* puts the fun back into stealth. It's time to get your creep on. **Dave Kozicki**











ADVENTURE

THE DA VINCI CODE

Can you unravel the code?

DISTRIBUTOR: TAKE 2 DEVELOPER: THE COLLECTIVE PRICE: \$69.95 PLAYERS: 1 OUT: NOW WEB: www.2kgames.com 60HZ MODE: NO WIDESCREEN: NO SURROUND SOUND: NO NOLINE: NO

o you read the book and saw the movie starring the smoking Audrey Tautou but you haven't played the game yet have you? Well guess what? It's the exact same story from the book and the film. That's pretty much it.

For those who don't read books or like Tom Hanks movies, *The Da Vinci Code* is the story of two puzzle solvers trying to find out why their mutual friend was murdered and who was behind it. Their journey ends up unravelling the secrets behind the Holy Grail.

For those who have read the book and/or watched the movie, you'll fly through the game because you'll already know the answers to most of the puzzles and what to do next. There are a few new locations and

puzzles – but it's likely the only piece of the game you'll find remotely interesting is the combat which, interestingly, is all rhythm based.

The Da Vinci Code's main problem is that there are too many cut-scenes and they all tend to run way too long. You always have the option to skip them but if you do you'll most likely miss a major plot point or the details regarding your next objective.

If you've read the book and seen the film there's nothing new to discover here. It's really only for *Da Vinci Code* nutters. We don't mean the guys who stand in the street handing out pamphiets though (but if you stop us again you're going to need to figure out the code for removing a foot from your arse).

Paul Frew



Play-test









ACTION/ADVENTURE

OVER THE HEDGE

Over the hill?

DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIMISION DEVELOPER: EDGE OF REALITY PRICE: \$79.95 PLAYERS: 1-2 OUT: NOW WEB: www.overthehedgegame.com 60HZ MODE: NO WIDESCREEN: NO SURROUND SOUND: NO ONLINE: NO

ere we go again. Another movie tie in vying for the elite position of "Best adapted video game" ever. Yet another attempting to rise to the immense heights that it's predecessors did. Like, umm...oh yeah *King Kong* and there's...err... well, it's pretty slim pickings out there, otherwise. Most titles disappear into obscurity and countless live on in infamy in our "Hall of Shame". Has *Over the Hedge* got what it takes to make the cut?

Let's start with the good. You play as any combination of two characters, choosing between RJ the raccoon, Verne the turtle, Hammy the squirrel and Stella the skunk. Each is armed with a weapon, be it a golf club or hockey stick, and the game is a basic platformer with the added

bonus of giving anything that crosses your path a beat down. You also have a ranged attack where you can power up for greater damage. Something about a squirrel swinging a golf club never gets old. Two cool features are the ability to switch between players and being able to jump onto the shoulders of your partner in crime and deal out more punishment. You can also join or leave the action as the second player at will, and it doesn't interrupt the game play, which is pretty sweet.

The bad. The camera is fixed at all times, and is slow to catch up to you – which can make it difficult to see where you want to go – and the action is a little repetitive. All in all, Over The Hedge is a decent effort, but lacks a certain something to make it really stand out. & Dave Kozicki



The novelty wears off quickly. Enjoy it while it lasts.











RACIN

FORMULA ONE 06

Strap yourself in and feel the Gs

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY DEVELOPER: SONY PRICE: \$79.95 PLAYERS: 1-4 OUT: NOW WEB: au.playstation.com 60HZ MODE: YES WIDESCREEN: YES SURROUND SOUND: YES ONLINE: YES

ou might think it's hard to get excited about Formula One 06 after seeing the PS3 screens on page 50, but the PS2 version has still got a lot of impressive features under its hood.

This year's career mode gives you the option to start as the chief engineer, which basically means you'll be testing the cars for the main race. As you work your way up you'll eventually get behind the wheel of your favourite F1 car with your duties continuing even after you've parked your car in the garage – you'll make team decisions, analyse team data and set goals.

That's the best thing about Formula One 06; it's all about choices. If you're new to the series you can choose to shorten the length of the race and the intelligence of the

Ai. You can even have guidelines on the track illustrating how you should take the corners. But the pros won't be left out – the Ai will adapt to how well you're driving and you'll get the full F1 experience with pitstops and safety cars.

Multiplayer will be back in full force but this time you can add a PSP to the mix. You can race in all 18 races of the world championship with one player on the PS2 and one on a PSP. You can even compete online using both your PS2 and PSP if you're in a hotspot.

Formula One 06 continues to build on the successful franchise – it's by far the most in-depth F1 simulation out there. Plus with PS2 and PSP multiplayer, it should definitely whet your F1 appetite until Formula One 06 rolls onto the PS3 starting grid in November.
PS3 starting grid in November.

X OFFICIAL VERDICT				
GRAPHICS	Ø8	Shiny cars and luscious environments		
SOUND	Ø8	All you'll hear is the engines revving		
GAMEPLAY	Ø8	You decide how easy or tough it is. Very solid		
LIFESPAN	Ø8	Great multiplayer modes, great season mode		

The best F1 racer on the track, with enough to keep you entertained until PS3 rolls into pole position.





SPORTS

SENSIBLE SOCCER 2006

GOAL! GOAL! GOAL!

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI DEVELOPER: KUJU ENTERTAINMENT PRICE: \$49.95 PLAYERS: 1-2 OUT: NOW WEB: www.sensiblesoccer.co.uk 60Hz Mode: No Widescreen: No Surround Sound: No

f FIFA 06 and Pro Evolution are too complex for you then Sensible Soccer might just be your World Cup.

There are still official licenses and real players, it's just that they're all drenched in cel-shaded visuals. The best thing about it is that Sensible Soccer is just so simple that literally anyone can pick it up and score a goal in the opening minutes. You only have three buttons to worry about and two of them are for passing. There's also an arrow that's constantly swinging indicating where the ball will go when you pass or kick. It can take a little while to get used to the system but once you do you'll want EA and Konami to implement it in the next FIFA and Pro Evolution games.

Like we said, Sensible Soccer is simple and easy, but perhaps a little too simple and easy. Goals can literally be scored every minute and without sounding like Les Murray, it actually makes the game of soccer less fun to play. While goals in soccer are the most exciting part of the game, the reason they're exciting is because they rarely happen. There just seems to be as many

goals scored in a game of Sensible Soccer as there is in an air hockey game and sure it's fun for a while but ultimately it's not as satisfying as scoring a goal in FIFA or Pro Evo.

Like it's 1992 Amiga ancestor,
Sensible Soccer is ideal for multiplayer
matches and that's where it shines. It's
great for quick matches and anyone
who's never played a soccer or PS2
game, but for the rest of you who are
still suffering from World Cup fever, there
are better options out there for a serious
soccer game. & Paul Frew

GRAPHICS	IAL VERDICT Description Descr				
SOUND	0 5	Bland, like the US team			
GAMEPLAY	07	Simple, but a little too simple			
LIFESPAN	Ø6	Better with a mate			
Simple, addictive and fun but only in small doses.					

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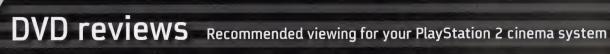
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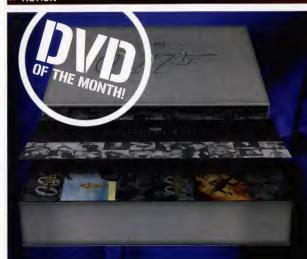


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X ACTION



JAMES BOND ULTIMATE COLLECTION

FILM: The James Bond series is second only to the Star Wars series on the list of the highest grossing film franchises of all time. It's little wonder, each of the 20 films in the long running secret agent saga is so packed with cars, guns, gadgets and girls it's as though they were meticulously created from a 'How to please guys' cocktail recipe book. The Ultimate Collection DVD set contains all of the official 007 movies to date and each of them features digitally remastered video and DTS 5.1 surround sound. All the classic Bond moments are in here, from the crotch-threatening laser beam in Goldfinger to the over-the-top

speedboat chases of Live and Let Die, and the films provide loads of exciting shakes and stirs. ****

EXTRAS: All 20 films feature a commentary track, as

well as a bonus disc crammed with numerous behindthe-scenes featurettes that expose the technology behind the gadgets and special effects, and more. $\star\star\star\star\star$

VERDICT: The series that defined the action blockbuster is back in a box set jam-packed with breathtaking stunts, dastardly villains and Pussy Galore. An absolutely essential purchase. TO





BAG-A-BOND

If you want to win one of five James Bond Ultimate Collection DVD sets, just answer this simple question:

Daniel Craig is the sixth actor to play James Bond in the official e series. Name the other five actors who've played Bond.

Mark entries as 'James Bond Ultimate Collection giveaway'. See page 15 for entry details.

X ANIME

BEAST WARS - THE COMPLETE 2ND SEASON

STARRING: Don Brown RATING: PG



FILM: It doesn't take long to jump straight into the action in Season 2. Picking up right after the events of Season 1, the Maximals are preparing reinforcements after the death of Optimus Primal

while the Predacons attempt to rewrite the timeline with Megatron to change the future forever. The animation is even better than Season 1 and the action is even more intense. Old-school fans will be happy to find some familiar faces pop up throughout the season.

 $\star\star\star\star$

EXTRAS: The usual special features, but the highlight for fans is definitely the convention panel with David Kaye (Megatron) and Garry Chalk (Optimus).

VERDICT: Beast Wars Is bigger and better in its second season and is a must-own for any old or new Transformers fan. PF

× ACTION

V FOR VENDETTA

STARRING: Natalle Portman, Hugo Weaving



FILM: Based on the graphic novel by Alan Moore and adapted for the silver screen by Andy and Larry Wachowski, V for Vendetta is a blockbuster popcorn flick that's as exhilarating as it

is angry. Set against the futuristic landscape of a totalitarian Britain, V for Vendetta is the story of a young woman rescued from certain death by a masked hero known only as V. V urges his fellow citizens to rise up against their oppressive overlords and ignites a revolution. In our post 9/11 world the idea of a terrorist-as-hero is bound to ruffle a few feathers, but *V* for *Vendetta* is actually a bold and legitimate examination of government fearmongering, with plenty of fantastic action to boot.

EXTRAS: Just a behind-the-scenes look.

VERDICT: A rare action film that's visually stunning but also gives you something to ponder while you're watching things explode. LR

X DRAMA

MATCH POINT

Starring: Scarlett Johansson, Jonathan Rhys-Myers **Rating:** M



FILM: A drama about ambition, obsession, infidelity and sex, Match Point isn't exactly uncharted territory for writer/director Woody Allen, but it's a formula that works. A former

tennis pro, Chris (Rhys-Meyers) has become used to falling a little short in his life. However, not long after he marries his luck turns around and he find himself enjoying the kind of wealth and success he's always yearned for. Unfortunately for Chris, he falls for his brother-in-law's fiancé, Nola (Johansson) and becomes obsessed with her. At any rate, Chris has to make a very important choice. What's particularly interesting about Match Point is how it explores the huge part luck takes in every aspect of our lives.

 $\star\star\star\star$

EXTRAS: Zip.

VERDICT: If you're not a Woody Allen fan this won't be the film to change that, but it is his sharpest flick in years. LR

X COMEDY

ULTRAVIOLET

Starring: Milla Jovovich Rating: M



FILM: A war has broken out between the humans and a vampire-like mutant middle is Ultraviolet, a vampire who is stuck babysitting a nine

year old boy targeted by the human government for death. You get everything you'd expect from a movie starring super-human vampires; and lots of blood. But it's nothing you haven't seen before.

EXTRAS: An audio commentary plus a four-part featurette about how the movie was put together, how the stunts were pulled off and how they made Milla Jovovich look so deliciously hot. ★★★

VERDICT: it doesn't suck but Ultraviolet is no Blade or even Buffy. Milla should stick to fighting zombies In the Resident Evil flicks. PF

** * GOLDFINGER

** * GOLDENEYE

★★★ LIVE AND LET DIE

* DIE ANOTHER DAY

LICENCE TO KILL

LICENCE TO THRILL

1. Honey Ryder (Ursula Andress) Appearing in the first Bond film. Dr. No, Honey Rider became the hottest Bond girl of all time the moment she emerged from the Caribbean surf in that white bikini. "Bond, James Bond"? How about "Undress, Ursula Andress"?



2. Xenia Onatopp (Famke Janssen) Miss Onatopp subdues her enemies by squeezing the life out of them with her legs. Getting trapped between the thighs of Jean Grey from X-Men? If that was any more like our ultimate fantasy it would be time to wake up and



3. Pussy Galore (Honor Blackman) Okay, so she may not be that attractive. but there's no doubt that she possesses the ultimate Bond girl name. Apparently in the original Goldfinger novel Pussy Galore was actually a lesbian. So it wasn't just a clever name then!



4. Jinx (Halle Berry) More than just a Bond girl, Jinx was actually an American secret agent working for the NSA. For a while there were rumours that Jinx would star in a spin-off movie of her own, but then Halle Berry went and made Catwoman. So it's looking pretty unikely now then.



5. Dr. Christmas Jones (Denise Richards) Denise Richards' character is actually a rocket scientist, which is fairly implausible given that Richards is a former swimsuit model. Although she's always welcome to inspect the rocket... IN OUR PANTSI



X COMEDY

DAVE CHAPPELLE'S **BLOCK PARTY**

Starring: Dave Chappelle



FILM: The man who blew up after cracking up audiences with the catchphrase, "I'm Rick James, bitch" is back hosting a street party with some of

the world's finest musicians. Fans of Chappelle might be disappointed with the lack of jokes and sketches but the music, especially the reunited Fugees, makes it worth checking out. The DVD contains the full sets from all the musicians so you won't get the highlights like in the theatrical release.

EXTRAS: A making of feature and extended sets from some of the musical acts. ★★

VERDICT: It's not as hilarious as Chappelle's Show but if you're a fan of the man and like listening to some good tunes then you'll get the best of both worlds with Block Party. PF

X ANIME

DRAGONBALL Z: **FUSION REBORN**

Starring: Masako Nozawa Rating: G



FILM: A disaster in Other World has unleashed one Hell up to the Z fighters to take care of it. To try and counter the hell that's breaking loose, Goku must power

up to his rare Super Salyan 3 form, but things go from bad to worse when it fails. It's the 12th film in the series but you can't tell. The action is just as exciting and Intense as the first DragonBall Z flick only it looks even flashier.

 $\star\star\star$

EXTRAS: Only a thetrical trailer and character profiles. Why couldn't they summon up some more special features?

VERDICT: They keep getting better and better. Once the credits roll you'll be hunting for any info you can find on the next DragonBall Z flick. PF

X DOCUMENTARY

MARCH OF THE **PENGUINS**

Starring: Morgan Freeman, some penguins **Rating:** G



FILM: If you're ever finding it tough to find a girlfriend, just be glad that you weren't born an Emperor penguin. Those poor bastards have to trek for miles and miles through the pitiless ice deserts of Antarctica

just to get some action - and worst of all, after the deed is done they get left with the task of warming the egg for two long winter months! March of the Penguins is an Academy Award winning look at the mating cycle of the Emperor penguin and the cinematography, and narration from Morgan Freeman, are of exceptionally high

EXTRAS: A couple of docos about the penguins and how they shot the whole thing.

VERDICT: A fascinating look at life in one of the most unforgiving environments on Earth. TO



FOR THE GIRLS: Felicity Huffman (Desperate Housewives) plays Bree, an uptight male-to-female transsexual preparing herself, or himself, for the final chop. Unfortunately, she, or he, receives a phone call from a son she (yeah, we're going to stop doing this) never knew she had. Her son Toby is in jail and she needs to post bail for him. Her therapist won't give final permission for the operation unless she goes to see him. When she gets there, Toby - a gay hustler - lets her in on his plans to become a porn star on the west coast. Cue dysfunctional family road trip, complete with grandparents who think Toby is their transgender son's boyfriend. Despite the fact Bree Is actually a pretty dull character there are enough interesting supporting characters and plot developments to make the story worth watching. The problem with this film is that it knows it's unconventional, but it almost goes out of its way to never let you forget that. Perhaps it could've cruised a little more and let the story tell itself

FOR THE GUYS: You're kidding right?

VERDICT: A little too sappy to be an edgy comedy but way too lewd to cut it as a midday movie. JG

Match Point was Woody Allen's first movie in the past 19 years to actually make a profit! His last 21 movies all fell way short of the bottom line.



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A bunch of guys playing NHL '94 has never been more hilarious. Trent: "I wish they still had fights in this game so I could bitch-slap Wayne" or Mike: "Make somebody's head bleed." Sue: "No man, we're in the playoffs." Trent: "I'm making Gretzky's head bleed for super-fan #99 over here." Classic.





THE BREAK UP

Vince Vaughn. PS2. Comedy gold. Whether he's avoiding washing up by throwing Molotovs at people in GTA: San Andreas or trashtalking a kid while playing Madden – it's all piss funny. You also get to see Jennifer Anniston's ass in this one, which Is kind of a bonus.

THE 40-YEAR-OLD VIRGIN

Andy Sitzer may have "more videogames than a teenage Asian kid" but it's the *Mortal Kombot* stoush between his mates that nets all the laughs. "You know how I know you're gay? Because you macramed yourself a pair of jean shorts."



MALLRATS

Brodie's love for Sega All-Star Hockey knows no bounds. "Look at the score. It's only the second period and I'm up 12 to two. Breakfasts come and go, Rene, but Hartford, The Whale? They only beat Vancouver once, maybe twice in a lifetime."

VAN WILDER

A pretty shonky comedy that basically fails to be actually funny (slightly problematic for a comedy), but it does have a great line about Ms. Pac-Man. "I know Ms. Pac-Man is special. She's fun. She's cute. She swallows."



Just got your PS2? Looking for a safe bet to blow your hard-earned on? *OPS2*'s GameStation is your best resource for finding top quality PS2 games. Some might be a little long in the tooth, but you'll probably be able to pick them up second-hand. Others are latest releases or Platinum titles, so finding them won't be a hassle. All are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

IE GAME OVERALL (

Whether you're a diehard fan of the show or just like the Idea of messing about with Elisha Cuthbert, 24: The Game is one of the best action experiences of the year.

AFL PREMIERSHIP 2005 OVERALL 08
Finally the AFL game we all deserve, if you love a little aerial ping-pong, leap onto

someone else's shoulders and grab it now.

if you're new to the series then this is a great opportunity to get introduced to the wackiness it has to offer, but even veteran chimp chasers will find a new Ape Escape experience that they'll be able to jump straight into and go bananas with.

BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT OVERALL 08
A solid and unique FPS that's only slightly let down by a lack of options and some

poor effects. HotSwapping rocks!

BLACK

OVERALL 09

This is Indeed gun pom, folks – it's light on story and heavy on action, delivering

wave after wave of shuddering wargasms. With superb firearms and environmental destruction, Black goes straight to number one in the FPS genre with a bullet.

BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30

A distinctly more mature take on war featuring levels of blood, foul language and sheer desperation not seen before in any other videogame.

BROTHERS IN ARMS: EARNED IN BLOOD OVERALL 08 Improves on the original and retains the maturity that makes the series unique. One of the most intense WWII shooters we've ever played.

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN

It's eye-meltingly spunky and so fast you'll you won't be able to blink Stop looking for an arrade paper that's more fun than Burnout 3 – you won't be able to find one

an arcade racer that's more fun than Burnout 3 – you won't be able to find one...

BURNOUT REVENGE

OVERALL 10

...until now! After four games, Criterion is showing no signs of burning out yet. The

best racing series around just got a WHOLE lot better. Revenge really is sweet!

BUZZI: THE MUSIC QUIZ

OVERALL 08

BUZZI: THE MUSIC QUIZ

OVERALL 08

BUZZI The Music Quiz is an irresistible music trivia package and yet another

que gaming experience from Sony.

ZZI: THE BIG QUIZ OVERALL (

it certainly builds on the original concept, especially in terms of broadening its accessibility and the variety of its question types. Diverse, funny and always competitive fun, BUZZ!: The Big Quiz is for practically everyone.

CALL OF DUTY 2: BIG RED ONE OVERALL 09

It's linear and overly scripted but BRO is still one of the best WWII games you'll

ever play, Move over Medal of Honor, BRO goes above and beyond the call of dutyl CAPCOM CLASSICS COLLECTION OVERALL 08

The king of arcade classics delivers the ultimate retro collection featuring golden

The king of arcade classics delivers the ultimate retro collection featuring golden oldies like Ghouls 'n Ghosts, Street Figher II and Final Fight. Know your roots!

COLD WINTER

OVERALL 08

A surprisingly superb first-person shooter that brings a lot of fresh ideas, a lot of blood and a lot of carnage. Definitely worth checking out.

CONFLICT: GLOBAL STORM

An impressive return for the Conflict series – great enemy AI, razor-sharp graphics and great co-op play, although it still has some Issues to iron out.

DARKWATCH OVERALL 08
A great FPS that's only let down by its lack of multiplayer options. A highly original take on a old genre – how many vampire westerns have you seen?

DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

Buzzing with energy and conceptual originality, it's a game anyone can pick up and play. Not too deep, but annihilating puny Earthlings has never been more fun

DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING OVERALL 09
This is the Devil May Cry you remember – stunning design, visuals, effects and

presentation. It's a work of art so grab it or you'll be the one crying.

DRAGON QUEST VIII: THE JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING OVERALL 08

If you're after an RPG with a little bit of bite and a more askew view, you wont be disappointed. A fun filled, light hearted and slightly twisted romp.

DRIVER: PARALLEL LINES
OVERALL 08
Faster than Bullitt, slicker than Ronin, more intense than The French Connection, more destructive than The Blues Brothers and with bigger jumps than The Dukes of Hazzard,

it's every great Hollywood car chase rolled into one game. Fasten your seatbelt.

EYETDY: PLAY 2

OVERALL 09

Do we need to explain? The Innovation and Introduction of the video camera to

gaming is brilliant. It's just one reason why the PS2 is so cutting edge.

EYETOY: PLAY 3

OVERALL 08

A brilliant collection of games that once again exploit the innovation that is EyeToy

GUN

OVERALL 09

A brutal, blood-drenched western that succeeds in being both believably authentic and thoroughly exciting.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2006 OVERALL 09

As close as you can get to the World Cup without spending thousands of dollars

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3 OVERALL 08
Decent as a singleplayer game, but totally unrivalled for two player fun. Worth a

jab for fans purely because of the individual styles and the more balanced fighting system, but just make sure you've got a mate handy to unleash on .

FINAL FANTASY X

OVERALL 09

This was one of the first games on the PS2 to really try and stretch the machine's graphics capabilities to the limit. The result is simply breathtaking.

Flatours minigames are worth the asking price alonel The PS2's best demolition derby racer – fantastic damage, fantastic handling, fantastic funi

REEDOM FIGHTERS OVERALL 09

For the first time ever, commanding squads and third-person shooting is so easy you won't even notice you're doing it. If you don't have it – find it.

THE GETAWAY OVERALL 09

No coin collection, no magic bonuses, just a whole lot of gritty crime action set in

a tough old city. Swearing, violence and not a shred of political correctness...

GOD OF WAR

OVERALL 09

Combines bloody action and puzzle-solving in a brilliantly realised, beautiful-looking

epic that rocks HARD on every level, An ESSENTIAL classic for action junkles.

GRAND THEFT AUTO III OVERALL 10

Revolutionary, open-ended gameplay that has spawned many an imitator, GTAIII is

not only a watershed for the PS2 – It has changed games forever.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

OVERALL 10

Takes everything great about GTAIII, adds countless extra features, paints it in '80s pastel colours and adds a totally kick-arse retro soundtrack.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

OVERALL 10

This is the greatest videogame ever made. Run, drive, fly, swim, boat, cycle, ride or

even skydlve your way through a whole state of mayhem.

The biggest, most authentic and most realistic racing simulator ever. 700 unique cars from 1886 to 2005 that handle exactly like their real-world counterparts. It's a car nut's wet dream.

GUITAR HERO

OVERALL 10

Guitar Hero is better than sex, more addictive than drugs and every bit as cool as real

rock & roll. Fill the empty space where your air guitar used to and let there be rock!

HITMAN: CONTRACTS

OVERALL 08

It's ethically dublous but there's no doubt about how good Silent Assasin Is. Multiple solutions, fantastic rag-doll physics and enough atmosphere to choke a horse.

HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY OVERALL 09

Fixes a lot of the nigging issues from the previous games while delivering a whole host

Fixes a lot of the niggling issues from the previous games while delivering a whole host of new brutal ways to take out your targets. Brilliantly executed.

ICO OVERALL 09

The dreamy-looking, wonderfully peaceful puzzling adventure gameplay, along with an entirely unique feel make people fall in love with Ico.

JAK II: RENEGADE OVERALL 10 Infusing GTA-style gameplay into the Jak & Daxter world has made this the first

ner that appeals to both Infants and adults alike.

JAK 3

OVERALL 09

Rounds out the trilogy in style – Jak's evolution from pixie-eared pansy to platforming badass is complete. Great mix of genres that'll keep you on your toes

platforming badass is complete. Great mix of genres that'll keep you on your toe to the end.

JAK X: COMBAT RACING OVERALL 08

it's obviously inspired by Burnout Revenge but it has enough unexpected twists and turns to keep you gripping the wheel.

JUICED OVERALL 08

It can't match Midnight Club 3 for thrills, but it boasts a far more impressive stable for car lovers than NFSU2. Not revolutionary, but a soild racer for hardcore rev-heads.

KING KONG

Overall 09

On par with Resident Evil 4 as one of the most exciting games ever.

LEGO STAR WARS

OVERALL 08

Parents should buy LEGO Star Wars for their kids, no matter how old they are. It's the most fun we've had pushing coloured blocks around since Tetris. Easily the

the most fun we've had pushing coloured blocks around since fetris. Lasily the best game based on the Star Wars prequels.

LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING OVERALL 09

Gorgeous and packed to the gills with sword-swinging action, it's as close as it

gets to being in the movie without having to go to New Zealand.

MASHED

OVERALL 09

Totally addictive multiplayer – make sure you've got a multitap. This is why you got

into gaming to begin with.

THE MATRIX: PATH OF NEO OVERALL 08

With a bit more polish this could have been The One. Achingly close, but still very enjoyable when it works. Woah...

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE OVERALL 09

The opening level, the beach landing on Omaha, is perhaps one of the most

atmospheric and moving game moments to date. Still one of the PS2's best shoot
MERCENARIES
OVERALL 08
An impeccably designed and action-packed sandbox of free-roaming combat.

Steal choopers, Jack tanks – Mercenaries Is fun, fun, fun 'til the commies take your C4 away.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

OVERALL 10

A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage game that's reason enough to buy

a PS2. A superbly paced, gripping story.

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER OVERALL 10

It's the ultimate lone-soldier adventure, packed with riveting combat and a stunning jungle setting. Acquire immediately.

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB FOITION REMIX OVERALL 09

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION REMIX

You don't just get the fantastic MG3 in its entreity, but also 24 extra vehicles, 25 added songs and a new stage, Tokyo. This is a ridiculously good package for its tiny cost. If you can find a more stylish street racer cheaper than this, you're lying.

MORTAL KOMBAT: SHADLIN MONKS

OVERALL 08
A kick ass beat 'em up with a classic Mortal Kombat feel. Outstanding! Mortal Kombat fans will not be disappointed.

MX UNLEASHED OVERALL 08

Huge freestyle countryside, great ridling physics and addictive bonus vehicles like a stunt plane, Baja Buggy, monster truck and even a chopper. Spot on.

Your definitive guide to the ever-expanding library of PlayStation 2 games

dder and faster than its aiready impressive older brother, if the huge city and extra rides can't satisfy your need for speed we don't know what will.

NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED

ers, muscles and European exotics meet in a fantastic racer featuring some of ost Intense cop chases you'll ever find - all the speed you need!

An epic time-travelling samural adventure featuring everyone's favourite

man Jean Reno. A classic in anyone's book.

PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME

tures everything that made the original a classic and combines it with slick graphics, smooth gameplay and a hot chick to fight alongside you.

PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN It's gone down a decidedly darker road than its enchanting predecessor but it still

PRNCE OF PERSIA: THE TWO THRONES ngly breathtaking finale, it dethrones its stablemates and steals the crow

good to be the King! Or the Prince, at least...

Kicks off with a bang and never lets up. Gob-smacking graphics, an explosi arsenal and consistently exiting and varied gameplay.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5 ou enjoy sports games, especially long bouts of multiplayer tomfoolery

no further. Best soccer action on PS2 - no question.

PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY is psychic-charged jaunt takes the third-person shooter, levitates it into the ai

and makes it slap itself involuntarily.

From the creator of Grim Fandango, Psychonauts is warped, wacky and worth a

Far more loyal to comic than It's celluloid sibling - bring on the builets, break out

gs and prepare for punishment. You won't regret it.

OVERALL 09 RATCHET AND CLANK 2: LOCKED AND LOADED The sheer number of the gadgets and crazy weapons alone would make this game

RATCHET AND CLANK 3: UP YOUR ARSENAL OVERALL 09

The single player game is fantastic, but the online multiplayer mode puts most

oters to shame. Great gadgets and humour abound.

OVERALL 09 RATCHET: GLADIATOR An explosive new Ratchet adventure that everyone should pick up. Not too

nt from Up Your Arsenal, but you'll still have a blast! RED DEAD REVOLVER

A great spaghetti western shooter bursting with cool characters, duels and frontier

s, brilliant presentation and a sweet Sergio Leone-style soundtrack

Resident Evil 4 is the perfect action game. Destined to be imitated for years to come, game is so good it should be compulsory. It's like you're playing a 20 hour cutscenei

Super-stylish retro-futuristic graphics, intense old-skool shoot 'em up gameplay nping dance tracks from top artists which remix themselves a

RICKY PONTING INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 2005 OVERALL 09

So undeniably enjoyable that you really can't afford to miss it. It's one of the best sports games we've played and the multiplayer is unbeatable. Miles ahead of

ROGUE TROOPER olute must-have for fans of the comic book series, and an impressive slat

of sci-fl action for everyone else. A faithful interpretation of the 2000AD comic, with plenty of solid stealth action to sink your teeth into.

Minor Al quibbles aside we've finally got a game of rugby that looks as good as

other top-tier sports titles. About bloody time, tool

at graphics and addictive multiplayer it successfully captures all the action of the NRL Puts the boot into the competition and sends 'em straight to the blood bini

r mind or just shoot 'em. Definitely worth looking into.

SHADOW OF ROME

A superb realisation of bloody arena combat. Some of the maximus fun you can with a sword. For those who are about to die - we salute you.

OVERALL 09

SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS OVERALL 09
If you're looking for an adventure unlike any other you've ever undertaken, you've

One of the nastiest games on PS2 - arguably scarler than Silent Hill 4. We dare

THE SIMPSONS: HIT AND RUN

When it comes to GTA rip-offs they don't get any more blatant than this, but walking nd a living and breathing Springfield is so much fun that you won't care

OVERALL 09 SINGSTAR PARTY Another 30 songs to crucify and new multiplayer modes.

Another solid SingStar title at a bargain price. New modes plus Australian and

Trashy, tacky and totally dated – we love iti The SingStar hits just keep on coming!

OVERALL 09 SINGSTAR ROCKS!

Scream your way through The Offspring, Nirvana, Powderfinger, Grinspoon, The Screaming Jets, INXS, Stereophonics, Blur, Deep Purple and The Rolling Stones. We're gonna rock 'n roll all night (and party every day). It's SingStar with ballsi

at platforming for all ages. Plenty of substance, great visuals and offbeat ters. Well worth a look - especially for the younger set.

SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES

urful and varied, Sly's third outing will please long time fans – but he's still

As a single-player game it is a satisfying tactical action experience, but as an online game it's an intense, up-all-night addiction. The best online game and one ld keep you going and going until PS3.

it's the easiest fighting game to get into, but to be truly great will take years! The ers, weapons and the mind-blowing special moves are second to none

Still the best fighter around but you've already fought this fight before. Not a

ve leap from Soul Callbur II but still essential for fighting fansi

SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR

Featuring stunning characters & backgrounds, Spartan: Total Warrior is an intense

on title that may look simple but requires a lot of brains to survive OVERALL 09

A massive, free-roaming Manhattan complete with every major landmark - swing,

imp, sprint and dive anywhere you want.

It's one mountain with an avalanche of features. You decide whether you want to ce against your arch-nemesis, hang out on the half-pipe or just explore. Snow joke

Live the battles from the Star Wars films on the front lines with weapons and

hicles from all the films so far. Need this game, you do. THE SUFFERING: TIES THAT BIND

esn't add a great deal to the original concept, but still plenty of fun. Suffering that's actually enjoyable? Kinkyl

Tekken 5 is a major improvement over Tekken 4. Damn this game looks good. If it as a girl she'd have Kylie Minogue's bon-bon and Shannon Elizabeth's jubblies

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 06

The best Tiger yet, but far from a revolution.

OVERALL 10

ges and link-up support for up to 16 players at oncei

OVERALL 09 TIMESPLITTERS: FUTURE PERFECT More fun than we thought possible. Super smooth, super stylish and the bes

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

ew Lara is as agile as the Prince of Persia and as swift as the God of War. And she's got boobs. It's short, but oh so sweet. Undoubtedly the best Tomb

Ralder game since the original classic. TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL

rsion the game creates. The stealth combined with the shadowy rons truly add up to an involving experience. Plus the gadgets kick serious assi TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW

package - It's just a little on the short side.

TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY , and cooler than a Sugar Daddy, Chaos Theory is the best "pure" stealth ne on the PS2. If you haven't got into the series yet, now is the perfect time.

TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND OVERALL 08

the Underground games, but the series is in need of a bigger or OVERALL 08

Plyphony's first crack at motorcycle racing is great, but there's still plenty of room

its lack of originality saw it labelled by some as simply GTA: LA, but the addition of John Woo-style shootouts make this a brilliant, if brief, roller coaster ride.

It's the best looking and, for the most part, best playing superhero game ever de. A no brainer for webheads. Trust your spidey-sensel

It's violent, it's sadistic, but it's this guilty pleasure is one of the best FPS games on

PS2. If you've already cracked Black, don't miss Urban Chaos - it's a rioti

V83 is the greatest racing simulator ever. 21 cars on track, wicked damage and the most realistic racing ever - V83 doesn't just trump V82 in every way, it's even better than GT4. Get It nowl

Violent, vicious and seriously cool. The Warriors is an instant classic. The

entation is awesome and the combat rocks. Can you dig it, suckers WIPEOUT: FUSION OVERALL 09

A face-meltingly fast, futuristic roller coaster of a racing game

been one game in the past six months that's made us team stare

fascination for hours and giggle hysterically, it's this one. We Love Katamari? Hell

WRC: RALLY EVOLVED Exactly the shot in the arm the genre needed - this is as good as raily games will get until the PS3 arrives. Gritty, realistic and it looks absolutely stunning

WWE: SMACKDOWNI VS. RAW 2006 Not only a new benchmark for wrestling games; it's a new standard for sports

The graphics actually use cel shading to great effect [for one of the only times ever). You feel as if you've wandered into a three-dimensional comic book.



2000 was

a busy year – particularly when a nifty little device called the PS2 hit proceeded the world. it gets tough



gems that hit the original PlayStation during its

One of those gems was Hogs of War One of those gems was Hogs of War.
Some of you are probably scratching your heads
right about now. Some of you are probably already
tuning out. But we know there are still a few
people out there who are grinning just thinking
about the hilariously daft, four-player, turn-based
porcine warfare that Hogs of War offered.
Hogs of War was actually just a spin-off of Worms.
With pigs. That's pretty much it. In other words,
it was a mix of turn-based and real-time strategy
with crazy weapons and plenty of humour. with crazy weapons and plenty of humour.
It wasn't pretty, but with three mates it was bloody addictive. Vying for control of the Saustralasian continent with your choice of patriotic oinkers was the aim of the game. Stereotypes were exploited to their fullest extent for team designation, to their fullest extent for team designation, although they were so insanely overdone they weren't the least bit offensive. The teams ranged from Piggystroika (Russia), Uncle Ham's Hogs (USA) and the Sushi Swine (Japan). Even the grunts themselves had zany names, like Herr Dry from the Sow-A-Krauts (Germany).

Better yet, Captain Flashheart himself, Rik Mayall, (The Young Ones, Blackadder) came on board to provide the sidesplitting voiceovers.

Easily some of the best fun four people could have

Easily some of the best fun four people could have on a PSone short of booting up Crash Team Racing or Team Buddies.

LOVECHILD



The no-holds-barred warfare of Worms crossed with the type of humour that kept wacky Brit Rik Mayall out of the dole queue.





PlayStation 2 Station.2

On The DVD

PLAYABLE DEMOS

Other magazines let you watch, OPS2 lets you play!



his month's demo will have you jumping out of your chair in fear, singing your heart out, smashing cars with a giant hammer and waving your arms in the air like you just

Fans of survival horror and Japanese schoolgiris wili get their fix this month with the frightening Forbidden Siren 2. Make sure you play this one

with the lights on otherwise you're guaranteed to become an insomniac for life.

One of the most popular series in PlayStation history also makes an appearance this month. SingStar Rocks! will bring out the Australian Idol in you, and when we say that we mean the Guy Sebastian Australian Idol rather than the Anthony

Callea Australian Idol [What's the difference? – Ed].

Earache Extreme Metal Racing revives the good ol' days
of Rock 'N Roll Racing with chunky road beasts, weapons of

mass destruction and headbanging heavy metal music. We also jump on the World Cup bandwagon with the EyeToy: Play Sports Football Fever demo. Throw on your Aussie jersey and see if you can stop more goals than Aussie goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer.

Sensible Soccer, Micro Machines V4, Tomb Raider: Legend, Fight Night Round 3 and Driver: Parallel Lines all make welcome returns so if you haven't checked these out yet then

You know it!



PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the \downarrow and \uparrow keys. To choose within a section use ← and →. Press ⊗ to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.

YOUR DISC

Every issue, Official PlayStation 2 Magazine brings you something no other magazine can – playable demos. Offering exclusive levels, tracks and missions, our playable DVD enables you try the very latest PS2 games before you buy, often weeks, even months before release. Why risk your hard-eamed cash on a \$100 game when you can try it out on our cover-

mounted DVD? From Burnout Revenge and MGS3 to NFS Most Wanted and God of War, we've always featured playable demos of the games that matter. Throw in top quality video footage of the hits of the future and our DVD is the best bargain on the shelves.

■ DISC PROBLEMS?

if your disc isn't loading up, try laying your PS2 upside-down before loading to relieve pressure on the disc laser. If problems persist then simply send it back to this address for a replacement. Demo Disc Returns

Official PlayStation 2 Magazine

P.O. Box 1037, Bondi Junction NSW 1355



FORBIDDEN SIREN 2

Scarier than bad sushi

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY OUT: NOW PLAYERS: 1

ou'll be taken through the tutorial level of the game with your gulde Mamoru Itskukl. Just because it's a tutorial doesn't mean there won't be scares. Follow the prompts and In no time you'll be scaling walls, killing bloodied zombles and rescuing the girl of your dreams... only she'll have



EARACHE EXTREME METAL RACING

It's hammer time!

DISTRIBUTOR: TBC | OUT: TBC | PLAYERS: 1

eep on the right of your opponents throughout the race. Then when you're side by side, hit on and whammy, they'll explode into a giant fireball. The best part is that there's no lap limit. Just keeping rolling, rolling, rolling and have a smashing time until the game returns to the menu screen.



SINGSTAR ROCKS!

Rock out with your...

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY OUT: NOW PLAYERS: 1-2

arm up your vocal chords, plug in your microphones and rock out with Blur's 'Song 2', The Killers' 'Somebody Told Me', The Rolling Stones' 'Paint It, Black' and Gwen Stefani's 'What You Waiting For?'. It's the PlayStation 2's ultimate rock companion! Now that's what we're talking about.



✗ SPORTS

SENSIBLE SOCCER

Soccer it to them!

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI WOUT: NOW PLAYERS: 1-2

t's not in the same league as 2006 FIFA World Cup but it's just as fun and addictive. Lace up your boots and take on England or Argentina for world supremacy... or just to see who's the better soccer team. You won't have a full 80 minutes so make your move early so it's you that's doing the victory lap when the final whistle is blown.



TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

Back to Bolivia

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI OUT: NOW PLAYERS: 1

X ADVENTURE

he Time Trial time for this level in the full game is 12 minutes and 30 seconds. So since this is only haif the level we'll give you six minutes to make it to the end. That's five minutes of actual tomb raiding and one minute staring at Lara's dripping wet body after she gets out of the water!



X BACING

MICRO MACHINES V4

Micro madness!

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI OUT: NOW PLAYERS: 1-4

it the track on the kitchen, chicken coop or rooftop and then start your engines. Don't forget to pick up as many weapons as you can to eliminate the competition and stay on track otherwise you'll always be coming up the rear... just like Naz does with his micro machine.



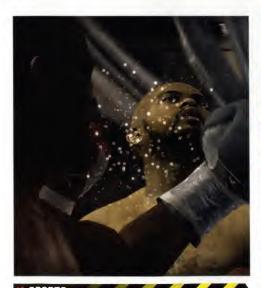
Y PARTY

EYETOY: PLAY SPORTS

Stop the balls!

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY OUT: NOW PLAYERS: 1

f you've been watching the World Cup then you've probably got a hankering for some football action. So kit up and step in front of the goal and see how good you are at stopping balls flying in front of your face. Hey, we've all been there before right? Right?



FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

Put up your dukes!

DISTRIBUTOR: EA ... OUT: NOW ... PLAYERS: 1-2

fight between Roy Jones Jr and Bernard Hopkins is a must-see event and Fight Night Round 3 is a must-play title. Select who's corner you will be in, warm up your right thumb and then use it on the analogue stick to throw down a fisticuff. Watch out for the haymaker, it'll get you every time.



X ACTION

DRIVER: PARALLEL LINES

Take it for a spin

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI OUT: NOW PLAYERS: 1

s every action game should, this demo starts off with a high-speed police chase. Ditch the pigs and your reward will be a relaxing cruise around The Bronx. You can spend the remaining time on the demo to see the parks and back alleys or you could Just run over a bunch of pedestrians. Whatever floats your boat.







BODY ARMOUR

DOOT! AND

- There's a jetty at the south-west corner of portland. Go into the tunnel near the diner in Callahan Point to get there. The body armour is at the bottom level of the jetty.
- In the south-east corner of the docks in Portland Harbour, there's some armour next to some big tanks.
- One block to the east of your safe house there is some body armour on the roof on the west side of the block. Will need to access the east side of the block to be able to get on top of the roofs in the middle of the block.

STAUNTON

- in an alley behind the Ammunation store in Newport.
- There are some stairs in the south-west corner of a highrise building across the street from the Fully Cocked store in Bedford Point.

SHORESIDE VALE

- in the second most north-eastern hangar of the airport.
- Beside the house, one house to the east of your safehouse in Cedar Grove.

Conquer Liberty City... again!

VINCENZO MISSIONS

MISSION 1: VINCENZO

This mission couldn't be easier. All you have to do is drive Vincenzo around a bit.

MISSION 2: SLACKER

Drive to the drug dealer marked on your map. After a brief talk with him he will be convinced to work. Drive him to work to complete the mission.

MISSION 3: DEALING REVENGE

Make sure you collect some Uzls and body armour before attempting this mission. Drive to the dealers marked on your map and use your Uzl to kill them. Target them with an and shoot them with . Make sure you collect the cash the dealers drop.

MISSION 4: SNUFF

You need to head to Ammunation to get a gun first but you will only be able to collect a handgun. Make sure you have some Uzi or machine guns though. Head to the construction site and use your superior weaponry to carve through all the enemies there. Collect the phone the guy drops to prove that you have killed him. Take the car

to the Pay 'n' Spray around the corner to get rid of your wanted level. Remember this Pay 'n' Spray because you should use it often in later missions when you have wanted levels. JD O'Toole missions will be unlocked now but finish off the last Vincenzo missions first.

MISSION 5: SMASH 'N' GRAB

Get a four-door car – a Mafia Sentinel is probably the best choice. Drive to the petrol station and get as close to the guys as you can so they can get in your car. Drive to the Pay 'n' Spray while trying to avoid getting your tyres blown out with road spikes. Be careful as you drive out of the Pay 'n' Spray because for a few seconds if you do anything illegal you will get all of your wanted level back. When the stars stop flashing it's safe to drive back.

MISSION 6: HOT WHEELS

Drive to the car. Unfortunately you get ambushed so you will need to drive back to the Pay 'n' Spray. Try to collect a police star or two on the way back to the Pay 'n' Spray to lower your wanted level. Drive the car to the crusher to complete the mission. Ma Cipriani missions open up now but stick to the JD missions next.













JD O'TOOLE MISSIONS MISSION 7: BONE VOYEUR

Head back to your hideout and put on some casual clothes before you do this mission. You need to stop your car next to the prostitutes (blue icons) so they can pay you and get out of the car to kill the dealers (red icons). Keep driving around the red light district until you have collected enough cash.

MISSION 8: DON IN 60 SECONDS

There's a stack of police so drive straight to the Pay 'n' Spray. Drive Salvatore back to his mansion. This opens up the Salvatore missions. You can now also buy Uzis from the Ammunation.

MISSION 9: A VOLATILE SITUTATION

Make sure you have collected at least one machine gun from JD O'Toole's roof before you start this mission. Drive to the casino and wait for the first car full of Sindaccos. Stand a few metres away from the casino and look on your map to see which direction they are coming from and get ready. You want to gun them down with your machine gun from about ten metres away. This way they won't be able to do much

damage with their Uzis. After you have defeated the third car full of Sindaccos a truck full of explosives will be sent. Make sure you have been collecting the Uzis the Sindaccos drop. Clear any vehicles away from the front of the casino because you need a clear path for the truck. Ignore the driver when he gets out. Jump in the truck and drive it about fifteen metres away from the casino (you will get a message when it is safe). Get out of truck and run as far away as possible before it blows up.

MISSION 10: BLOW UP 'DOLLS'

Get the car parked out the front of JD's and drive it to Oddball's bomb shop next to the car dealership. With the bomb fitted you need to drive very carefully to not set off the bomb. There is no time limit so take your time. Park into the garage that the Sindaccos are protecting. Get out and run about twenty metres away and detonate it with . Don't bother trying to kill the Sindaccos – just run away and detonate it. You will get a message when you are at a safe distance.

MA CIPRIANI MISSIONS MISSION 11: SNAPPY DRESSER

You need to snap some pictures of Casa to show Ma he's no good. Grab your camera from your apartment, then drive to Casa's place. You need to follow him in your car. You want to be close enough to see which way he goes around corners but far enough back that he doesn't notice you. If you do get too close you will need to stop or possible reverse. When you've followed him enough he will turn off the road and get out with his girls. Creep forward slowly until you can see him them zoom in with your camera and take a photo.

GENERAL TIPS

- The best way to make sure you have an easy run through the game is to always top up your health, armour and weapons before you save the game after each mission. This way whenever you fall a mission or die you can simply load your last save and you will be fully powered up.
- Side missions are also good for increasing your stats. Doing the food delivery missions will increase your total health and doing vigilante missions will increase your total body armour.
- Police freebies. Get into any police car and you will collect a free shotgun. Get Into any police SWAT truck and you will get some free body armour.
- Normally when you run you wlll tire out after a short period and have to rest. However, if you tap the ⊗ button, rather than holding it, you wlll still be able to run but you won't get tired.

POLICE BRIBE STARS

- There's a concrete ramp on the south side of the hospital. You need to be driving west to make the jump and collect the star, so approach it from the road behind the hospital and cut across the grass.
- At the south-east corner of Portland Beach you can see the star off to the side of the road. Get some speed and jump off the corner to get it.
- Go to Toni's mum's house in St Marks. There's a star in the block to the south-west of her house. Enter the grassy section of the block from the west to collect it.
- Drive over a small jump between blocks in Chinatown. The jump is directly south of one of the temples.
- In Trenton, just to the south-west of Joey's Auto shop, there's a star in the park here.
- There's another star across the road from Rusty Brown's Ring Donuts diner in Callahan Point. It's south-east of the diner.

STALINTON

- On a walkway in the park to the west of the football stadium in Aspatria.
- On the north-east end of a block, in a little alley. One block to the east of Liberty Campus.
- In the main courtyard of the northern half of Liberty Campus.
- On the footbridge, in the middle of Belleville Park.
- In a little alley cutting between the road by the water and Belleville Park. It's to the west of the park, a block south of the northern end of the park.
- In a little alley one block to the south of Callahan Bridge In Newport.
- In between one of the southern-most blocks of Torrington.

SHORESIDE VALE

- On the left of the road to the north of the airport that leads into the runway area.
- On the Inside of the corner of the bend in the road near Cochrane Dam. Just to the north of the east side of the bridge over the river.
- To the north of the road next to the river in Wichita Gardens.





Re-boot













MISSION 12: BIG RUMBLE IN LITTLE CHINA

Make sure you have got some grenades and some Uzi or machinegun ammo before you attempt this mission. Drive to the two Triad groups marked in red on your map. One will be a gang leader in a bulletproof truck. Use a car to keep ramming him off the road and making him crash into buildings. After you make him crash a couple of times he will get out and you can shoot him with your machine gun. The second red marker on the map is a group of Triads. The best strategy for them is to stand about ten metres away and lob a grenade at them. One grenade will kill them all. If you miss with the grenade, shoot them with your machinegun. Collect the ammo that they drop.

MISSION 13: GREASE SUCHO

Get into the Mafia Sentinel parked out the front of Ma Ciprlani's and drive to the start of the race marked on the map. Success in this checkpoint race is all about knowing where the next checkpoint will be so that when you're driving through the current checkpoint you know which direction to take. As you approach checkpoints you can see an arrow inside them telling you whether the next one is straight, left or right. These arrows are quite easy to see and will guide you well. There are also faint yellow markers on your map indicating where the next checkpoint will be.

After winning the race you will need to do a driveby shooting on Sucho to get him to jump out of his car. Drive up next to him on straight sections of road, hold **and** press the stick in whichever direction he is in. Don't try to do a drive-by on him on tricky parts of the road or near corners of you won't be able to follow him well. Kill him when he gets out to complete the mission.

MISSION 14: DEAD MEAT

Drive Casa to the sawmill. Chase after him with the axe, remembering that you can keep running without getting tired if you tap the & button rather than holding it. Eventually you will get close enough to him to hit him with the axe. Keep hitting him when he is on the ground to trigger the cut-scene.

Get In the van and barge through the police roadblock. Collect the police bribe star next to Joey's and the other one in Chinatown. Don't go for any of the bribe stars that are on jumps because if you flip the van it's mission falled. Drive back to Casa's to complete the mission.

MISSION 15: NO SON OF MINE

Make sure you have at least 100 bullets in a machinegun for this mission. Full body armour is also essential. Ma hires a bunch of hitmen who attack you at her house. Shoot the first hitman on the stairs, then jump over the wall behind you and down into the street. Aim to take out the hitmen from about ten metres away with your machine gun.

Quite a few carloads will come at you. Stay put on the road and take them out. If your health gets dangerously low, head for some health or body armour. Be sure to collect the machinegun that the last hitman drops.



MISSION 16: THE OFFER

When you get down to the docks you will be ambushed. Run away as soon as the













cut-scene ends, then use the Uzi to take the union workers out from a distance. Keep moving along, aiming at the union workers and shooting as soon as you can target them. The most dangerous thing they will do is throw Molotov cocktails at you so make sure to keep your distance. Once you have made your way back to the main gate you will have completed the mission.

MISSION 17: HO SELECTA

Grab one of the Mafia Sentinels from in front of Salvatore's house and drive it to the prostitutes marked on the map (in blue). Some of them will be in cars with clients. Simply shoot the car and kill the guy when he gets out. When you have three hookers in your car drive them to the picket line. Get another car full after this and that's it for this easy mission.

MISSION 18: FRIGHTENERS

Strap in for another easy mission. Grab the baseball bat from in front of your safe house and get on a motorcycle. Get to the first union worker marked on the map. Shoot the car he's in with your Uzi while on the motorcycle. Because you are on a bike you can shoot forwards, which is a lot easier than doing a drive-by beside their cars. When they get out of the car, smash them with the baseball bat a couple of times to scare them. Get all three and that's it.

MISSION 19: ROLLERCOASTER RIDE

Drive quickly down to the Head radio building and kill the driver. With the union boss in the car all you have to do is pick long straight roads and hoon down them, having little prangs ever so often. If your bonnet starts smoking stop crashing and just use speed and jumps to scare her. When she gives up, drive her to the picket line.

MARIA MISSIONS

MISSION 20: SHOP 'TIL YOU SROP

Take Maria to the shop. Head to the nearby police

star in Chinatown to lose the heat. After the second shop you will have three stars so it's best to hit the Pay 'n' Spray before going back to Maria's.

MISSION 21: TAKEN FOR A RIDE

Pick a fast car like a Sentinel. Drive Maria to the deal. Ram the drug dealer's car until they jump out. Use your machinegun on them and take Maria back to her apartment.

MISSION 22: BOOBY PRIZE

Get a bike then drive to Maria's. You have to compete in a bike race. It uses the same checkpoint system as the previous car race mission so use the same tactics. Try to stay away from the other bikers during the race because you often spin out if you nudge them.

MISSION 23: BIKER HEAT

the mission.

Get another motorcycle for this mission. Unfortunately this one's a tough mission. Kill the bikers who ambush you but don't waste much time because you need to hop on a bike and chase after Wayne quickly. Keep a very good eye on his marker on the radar because he will often duck down little alleys and footpaths. After you follow him around for a while he will lead you back to the same alley in Chinatown. Kill him to complete the mission.

MISSION 24: OVERDOSE OF TROUBLE

This mission is a lot easier than it seems. Grab a Sentinel and go pick Marla up. Drive her to the diner. Ignore the bunch of bikers who try to attack you. Just drive her to the construction site in Hepburn Heights, then to her apartment and then to Salvatore's to complete





Pump-action joy

Slow reload, fast kill

WEAPON LOCATIONS

Chainsaw: In a factory to the south-west of Joey's Auto. Enter the factory through the gate on the south side. The chainsaw is next to the wall

Flamethrower: on top of the roof of the building across the street to the south of Joey's Auto. Use the jump on the south side to get up onto the roof.

Grenades: On the east end of the tanker ship parked at the south side of the docks area in Portland Harbour. Use a bike to jump down to the boat, then get off the boat by taking the jump at the west end of the ship.

Uzi: Go to the large concrete walkway that goes along the water's edge on the west side of Portland. If you follow this walkway all the way down to the south end you will see a portable office there. Behind it is an Uzi.

Knife: On the upper balcony of the St Mark's Bistro. It's in the south-east corner of St Mark's. **Uzi:** There's an alley cutting across the largest block in St Mark's (it's also the southern-most block in St Mark's). The alley cuts across the grass off to the side of the alley at the west end. Machine gun: On the roof of JD's sex club in the red light district. Use the stairs near the back entrance to get up to the roof and jump around to the roof with the machine gun. Uzi: In between some shipping crates at the northern most edge of Harwood, To the north-east of the main road.

Shotgun: at the northern end of the jetty in Harwood

Uzi: There's one of the powerful Uzis on a jetty to the west of the football stadium in Aspatria. Always opt to use this type of UzI over the other two as It takes enemles down much faster. Grenades: In an alley behind the Ammunation

Shotgun: Beside the north-east side of a building, two blocks to the east of the southern end of the main park, in Newport.

Molotov Cocktails: Outside the tollets In

Knife: In the middle of the block to the south of Belleville Park.

Rocket launcher: On the edge of the Shoreside Vale coastline, directly under where the main bridge passes over the coastline. Directly west of the airport.

Knife: On the stairs leading down Into the subway, near the airport.

Heavy machinegun: on the roof of the most south-eastern hangar of the airport. Uzi: Under the base of the bridge, by the water.

On the eastern side of the river in Cedar Grove.

WHAT IS Re-play?

his section will breathe new life into your old games. Each month we'll either show you amazing things to find or set challenges for you to take up. We also welcome input from you, so If you've found something cool that you'd like to share with the other readers, or you'd like to set a challenge, just let us know! Even if you haven't found anything yourself, write in and tell us what game you'd like to get more out of and we'll do the searching for you. Email us at OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au or send it the old-fashioned way to OPS2 Re-Play, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355.

Be sure to check

out our official challenges too.

Each month we'll come up with a challenge of our own and select another from your own submitted challenges. To be an official challenge it must be easy to verify, and you'll also need to take care there aren't any cheats that'll affect the results. If you want to enter our official challenges just record on videotape or photograph your best efforts and send them in to PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW, 1355, clearly marked 'OPS2 Re-Play challenge'. We'll print the top results in future issues. The highest score in each of the two official challenges will win the game of the month, so

OFFICIAL CHALLENGE

We're pretty sure we've been clear about how much we love *Guitar Hero*, so it should come as no surprise we've cooked up a challenge worthy of the gods of rock themselves. Set the difficulty to medium and set your best scores for 'More Than A Feeling', 'Bark At The Moon' and 'Take It Off. To make it a little more fair we decided we'd get you to play three songs, not just one. The best combined score will win. Take a picture of your top score for each of the three songs, mark your entry 'Re-play Challenge – *Guitar Hero*', refer to the giveaway details on page 15 for entry instructions and send your picture in before August 15.



OFFICIAL READER CHALLENGE



The fantastic *Hitman: Blood Money* been sucking up a fair chunk of our time lately as we go for those sometimes elusive Silent Assassin rankings, so we couldn't resist printing this challenge from reader Jodie Miller of New South Wales. Head to the second level, 'A Vintage Year'. The challenge is for the best completion time with a level rating of Professional or greater. You won't be able to jog through the level wasting everyone in your path – you'll need to be smart. But you'll need to be quick and efficient too, so get cracking. Normal difficulty will suffice for this challenge. Take a picture of your stats screen, mark your entry 'Re-play challenge – *Hitman: Blood Money*, refer to the giveaway on page 15 for entry details and have them in before August 15!

WINNERS

OutRun 2006 and Resident Evil 4 don't have much in common on a regular day, but here at OPS2 being kick-arse at either one can score you a brand new game. Well, it could back in June anyway. Whether you've been flogging your Ferrari down the freeway or liquidating the living dead, competition for both of these challenges was hotter than Tabasco-filled hot tub with Jessica Alba in it. In hell. A copy of Agent 47's slick new murder 'em up Hitman: Blood Money will be on the way out to the top score holder in each challenge shortly, but congratulations also to everyone who entered!





June Challenge OutRun 2006

TOP SCORES! Massimo Raso, Vic 0'53"523

Simon Kent, Qld 0'53"934

Thomas Spowart, NSW 0'53"968

Ben Sipos, WA 0'54"107

Christopher Thrift, SA 0'54"195

June Reader Challenge RE4

TOP SCORES! Kyle Kuhn, SA 02:40:23

Ryan Marsden, NZ 02:41:39

Ryan Haynes, SA 02:44:42

Sophie Van Den Bergh, Qld 02:48.11

Simon Park, Vic 02:49:26

READER CHALLENGES



Bacon Army, OPS2 forum

Worms 4: Mayhem – In the challenges section, finish Deathmatch Nine in under 10 minutes. My best is 9 minutes 45 seconds.



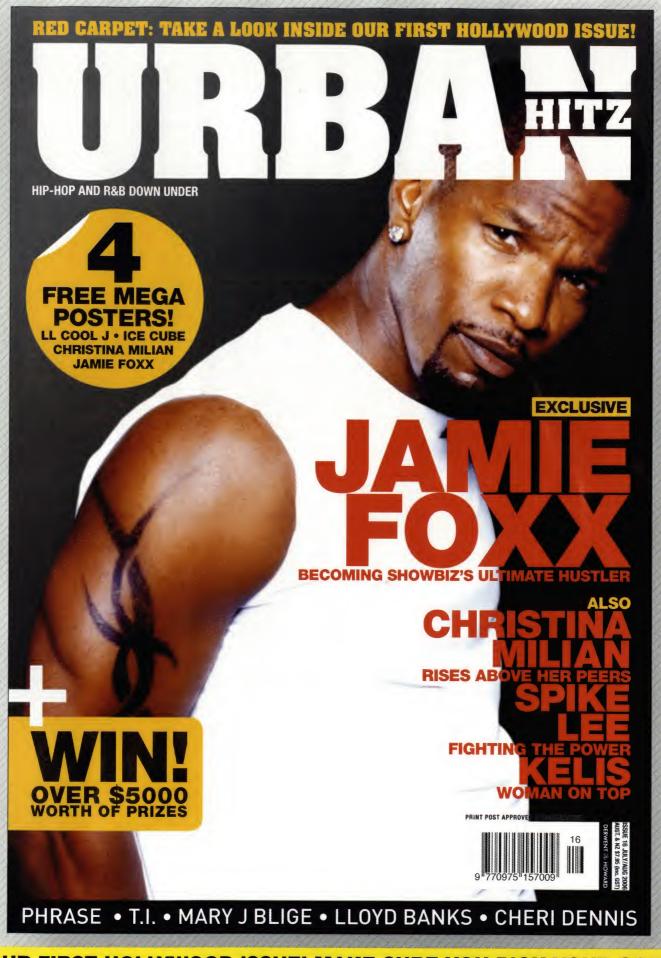
smashingtoxin, OPS2 forum

Star Wars Battlefront 2 – In the space battle in 'Rise of the Empire', disable the life support, sensor relay, communications transmitter and the engines without dying.



Nicki Gray, NZ

GTA: San Andreas – In the June issue reader Tom Corbett challenged us to land the AT-400 on the tallest builliding in the game. Here's a pic of my brother's successful attempt.



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CODE VAULT

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GTA LIBERTY CITY STORIES

Aggressive drivers (0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0)

All green lights (\triangle, \triangle) , (\square) , (

All vehicles chrome plated (a), (a), (b), (b), (b), (b), (c), (d)

Black cars (a), (b), (c), (c), (c), (c), (c), (c)

Bobble head world \downarrow , \downarrow , \downarrow , \bigcirc , \bigcirc , \bigcirc , \otimes , \bigcirc , \bigcirc

Calls closest pedestrian to come hop in your vehicle \otimes , \otimes , \downarrow , \otimes , \otimes , \uparrow , \otimes , \otimes

Cars drive on water \bigcirc , \otimes , \downarrow , \bigcirc , \otimes , \uparrow , \otimes ,

Change bike tyre size \bigcirc , \rightarrow , \otimes , \uparrow , \rightarrow , \otimes , \odot , \bigcirc

Clear weather \uparrow , \downarrow , \bigcirc , \uparrow , \downarrow , \bigcirc , \Box , \Box

Commit suicide $(0, \downarrow, \leftarrow, (0, \otimes), \otimes, (0, \uparrow, \triangle)$

Destroy all cars $(\mathbf{w}, \mathbf{w}, \leftarrow, \mathbf{w}, \mathbf{w}, \rightarrow, \otimes, \mathbf{w})$

Display game credits $(\mathbf{D}, (\mathbf{D}), (\mathbf{D}), (\mathbf{D}), (\mathbf{D}), (\mathbf{D}), (\mathbf{D})$

Faster clock $(\mathbf{D}, \mathbf{D}, \leftarrow, \mathbf{D}, \mathbf{D}, \rightarrow, \bigcirc, \otimes)$

Faster gameplay (a, b), (a, b), (a, b), (a, b), (a, b), (a, b)

Foggy weather \uparrow , \downarrow , A, \uparrow , \downarrow , S, ID, ID

Full health (B), (B), (B), (B), (B), (B), (C), (C)

Have people follow you \downarrow , \downarrow , \downarrow , \triangleq , \triangleq , \bigcirc , \blacksquare , \blacksquare

Money cheat (\$250,000)

Overcast weather \uparrow , \downarrow , \otimes , \uparrow , \downarrow , \triangle , \Box , \Box

Pedestrians have weapons $(\mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m})$

Pedestrians riot $(\mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m}, \mathbf{m})$

Perfect traction $(\mathbf{D}, \uparrow, \leftarrow, \mathbf{D}, \textcircled{a}, \textcircled{o}, \downarrow, \otimes)$



Rainy weather \uparrow , \downarrow , \bigcirc , \uparrow , \downarrow , \bigcirc , \bullet , \bullet

Raise media attention $(\mathbf{D}, \uparrow, \rightarrow, \mathbf{D}, (\triangle, \mathbb{D}, \downarrow, \otimes)$

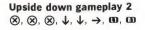
Random pedestrian outfit $(\mathbf{D}, (\mathbf{D}), \leftarrow, (\mathbf{D}), (\mathbf{D}), \rightarrow, (\mathbf{D}), (\mathbf{A})$

Slower gameplay (a), (a), (b), (a), (b), (a), (b), (b), (c), (c), (c)

Spawn Rhino $(\mathbf{D}, \mathbf{O}, \leftarrow, \mathbf{D}, \mathbf{D}, \rightarrow, \triangle, \bigcirc)$

Sunny weather (n), (n),

Upside down gameplay \downarrow , \downarrow , \downarrow , \otimes



Upside up $(\triangle, \triangle, \triangle, \uparrow, \uparrow, \rightarrow, \leftarrow, \rightarrow)$

Weapon set 1 \uparrow , \bigcirc , \bigcirc , \bigcirc , \downarrow , \leftarrow , \bigcirc , \bigcirc , \bigcirc , \rightarrow

Weapon set 2 \uparrow , \bigcirc , \bigcirc , \downarrow , \leftarrow , \bigcirc , \bigcirc , \rightarrow

Weapon set 3 \uparrow , \otimes , \otimes , \downarrow , \leftarrow , \otimes , \otimes , \rightarrow

White cars ⊗, ⊗, ₪, ⊚, ⊚, ₪, △, △







ULTIMATE CHEAT SITE



HEAD ON OVER TO HTTP://AU.PLAYSTATION.COM/ TO GET THE ULTIMATE CHEAT FIX. YOU'LL NEED TO REGISTER WITH THE SITE (BUT IT'S FREE AND EASY TO DO) THEN YOU'LL HAVE FULL ACCESS TO ALL THE CHEATS.





GET YOURSELF OVER TO HTTP://AU.PLAYSTATION.COM

Next month



PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

ON SALE 9 AUGUST

WITH AUSTRALIA'S ONLY PLAYABLE DEMO DISC!

GRAPHIC VIOLENCE

After the disappointments that were the Metal Gear Acld games, Hideo Kojima finally seemed to have got things back on track last month with the announcement of Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops, a more conventional Metal Gear outing for PSP. Guess what? He's getting weird again. Kojima will also be delivering Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel to the handheld, which isn't so much of a game as it is an interactive comic retelling the events of the original MGS. Full review next month.



PSP TOP TEN GAMES CHART

GAME	CATEGORY	DISTRIBUTOR
1 FIFA 2006 World Cup	Sports	EA
2 Daxter	Platform	Sony
3 GTA: Liberty City Stories	Action	Take 2
4 FIFA 2006	Sports	EA
5 Cars	Racing	THQ
6 Untold Legends	RPG	Activision
7 WWE SmackDown! vs. RAW 06	Sports	THQ
8 NFS Most Wanted 5-1-0	Racing	EA
9 NBA Live 2006	Sports	EA
10 World Series of Poker	Poker	Activision

DCD DELEACE COUEDLILE

PSP RELEASE SCHEDULE			
JULY	CATEGORY	DISTRIBUTO	
Def Jam FFNY: The Takeover	Beat 'em up	EA	
Field Commander	Strategy	Ubisoft	
Formuia One 06	Racing	Sony	
Juiced Eliminator	Racing	THO	
Pirates of the Caribbean	Action	THQ	
Silent Hill Experience	Interactive film	Atari	
Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror	Action	Sony	
Talkman	Language	Sony	
AUGUST	CATEGORY	DISTRIBUTO	
Madden NFL 07	Sports	EA	
Miami Vice	Action	Vivendi	
NBA Ballers: Rebound	Sports	Red Ant	
Super Monkey Ball Adventure	Platform	THO	
World Tour Golf	Sports	Red Ant	
	o.erro.orm	DIGONOLDI ITI	

World Championship Poker 2	Cards	Red Ant
LATE 2006	CATEGORY	DISTRIBUTOR
Ace Combat X: Skies of Deception	Action	Sony
Capcom Classics Reloaded	Retro	THQ
Dave Mirra BMX Challenge	Sports	TBC
Gangs of London	Action	Sony
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories	Action	Take 2
GUN Showdown	Action	Activision
Killzone: Liberation	Action	Sony
Mercury Meltdown	Puzzle	QV Software
Metal Slug Anthology	Action	QV Software
MotoGP	Racing	Sony
Planet PSP	Travel	Sony
Ratchet and Clank: Size Matters	Platform	Sony
Scarface: The World is Yours	Action	Vivendi
Silent Hill Origins	Survival Horror	Atari
Sonic Rivals	Platform	THQ
Superman Returns	Action	EA

PSP NEWS

Everything that's happening in the world of PSP

ASHES TO ASHES

Reclaim the Um with Ponting on PSP

The Australian Cricket team will have to travel all around the country in their efforts to reclaim the Ashes back from the Poms this summer, but you'll be able to do it from the comfort of your own couch or toilet seat now that Ricky Ponting International Cricket is hitting the PSP pitch in September. We happen to think that RPIC2005, released late last year for PS2, is hands down the most enjoyable cricket game ever made and we're so excited about a handheld version that we've been pelting English co-workers with garbage and streaking naked through the office reception area (even more than usual). Details on the game remain scarce, but Wi-FI multiplayer is a certainty and updated ICC tournament rosters a definite possibility. We can't wait to give the Poms a PSP pounding!







LONELY NO MORE

Lonely Planet guides PSP bound

With the newly released Talkman, the boffins at Sony are teaching PSP owners how to talk when they're overseas. Now with the upcoming Planet PSP range of interactive travel guides, Sony will be teaching PSP owners where to walk when they're overseas. Created in conjunction with people behind the famous Lonely Planet series of travel books, the Planet PSP range will launch with six European city guides this spring, and more guides from cities around the globe are likely to follow. Each UMD guide comes stuffed with hundreds of local points of interest such as restaurant, shopping and nightlife information, detailed maps of streets and transit systems, audio tours and customisable itineraries. The first six guides released will include cities like London, Paris and Amsterdam - you can save embarrassment by never having to ask for directions to the Red Light District again!

HUNTING SEASON

Win a copy of Monster Hunter Freedom!

"Be vewy, vewy quiet - we're hunting monsters!" Wait, was that an impression of Elmer Fudd or George W. Bush? We're not exactly sure because we can't tell them apart, but what we do know for certain is that Monster Hunter Freedom is a truly epic RPG adventure for the PSP, and we like it so much we want to give it to you. Thanks to our pals at THQ we've got 10 copies of the game to giveaway, but we're not making it easy – we want you to design the ultimate monster and the best 10 win!

So bust out the textas, pencils and crayons, and get cracking - if your beast is particularly impressive we'll even print it in these here pages! Think of the exposure you'll be working for Stan Lee in no time!

Stuff your masterpiece in an envelope and mark it as 'Monster Hunter Freedom giveaway'. Refer to page 15 for competition details.



NHL 2007

The Godfathe







METAL SLUG ANTHOLOGY

Pack a gunshop in your pocket

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-2 DISTRIBUTOR: QV SOFTWARE DEVELOPER: SNK WEB: www.qvsoftware.com.au LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 RELEASE DATE: LATE 2006

NK has generously loaded all six Slugs into its pistol for the upcoming Metal Slug Anthology. Considering that buying all six games when they were originally released on SNK's Neo Geo console would have set you back a wallet-crippling \$1,800 (and finishing them all at the arcade would have possibly cost you a lot more), this collection packs in even more value than firepower.

While we may have seen Metal Slug 1-5 appearing on other consoles recently, the sixth game (Metal Slug X) makes its first ever debut outside of the Neo Geo market. Metal Slug X is a limited edition remake of Metal Slug 2 (with even more painstakingly detailed 2D graphics).

Throw in a two-player Wi-Fi mode where you and a mate can team up and unleash hell together through each of the six games and you've got what should be a keeper for action fans. - NP

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

80%

METAL SLUG ANTHOLOGY is a retro collection with some serious firepower. Six shooters on one UMD should equal a whole lot of bang for your buck.

Win a copy of Pirates of the Caribbean on PSP! Are your swashes prone to buckling? Do you often find yourself laughing heartily, and then jumping off something? Are you not content with sailing a mere five or six seas? Ah-harghhh! The spirit of a pirate, ye possesses! If you're lusting after some adventures on the high seas above Davy Jones' Locker then we've got just the tonic, thanks to our hearties at Buena Vista Games we've got 10 copies of the swordswinging, grog-swilling Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead

Q: Name the actor who plays Capt Jack Sparrow in the Pirates of the Caribbean films?

Man's Chest to giveaway! Ya-har-har-harghhh! To win one, all you have to do is correctly answer the

following question:



ON THE RADAR

Here are five of the upcoming PSP games you should be saving for.

MERCURY MELTDOWN

The sequel to one of the best puzzlers on PSP will feature over 160 levels and enhanced blob physics (apparently the same used by Britney Spears' chins).



FIELD COMMANDER

This strategic military sim has been receiving rave reviews in the US. Then again, there are a lot of military nuts in the States. Either way, it looks good to us - expect a fuil review next month.



EF JAM FIGHT FOR NY: THE

Worth getting just for the celebrity fighters - you can finally have Carmen Electra in the palm of your hands (and Lil' Kim - you might want to wear gloves).



FORMULA ONE 06

Not only does it support online matches against owners of the PS2 version, it also allows you to carry all the cars and tracks from the popular motorsport on either side of your 'pole position' (in your hip pockets).



GTA: VICE CITY STORIES

Okay, you got us, that's actually a screen of GTA: Vice City on PS2. But why do you have to be so critical? We let it slide when you grew those stupid sideburns last month. Sheesh.



PSP Magazine





FUN FACT!

Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror includes a bonus mission for fans of the series that ties up a few loose ends from the previous episode - The Omega Strain.











SYPHON FILTER: DARK MIRROR

Mirror mirror on the wall, is this the fairest of them all?

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY DEVELOPER: SONY BEND PRICE: \$79.95 PLAYERS: 1-8 (AD-HOC & INFRASTRUCTURE) OUT: JULY

BACK STORY

When Syphon Filter hit PSone many pundits were expecting a poor man's Metal Gear Solid. What they got, however, was one of the greatest action games ever made. Damn, we're getting all teary-eyed just thinking about how much we loved that sucker. Man, we promised ourselves we wouldn't cry...

yphon Filter was without a doubt one of the best action series on PSone. After three absolutely stellar outings on the original PlayStation we were expecting big things from The Omega Strain, the first PS2 Syphon Filter title, but unfortunately something went awry. Square-jawed, all-American hero Gabriel Logan was relegated to a supporting role and the series' mojo went with him. With Gabe behind a desk instead of an M16, terrorist scumbags worldwide breathed a collective sigh of relief, no longer terrified of Logan lurking around every corner waiting to smite them with a simple squeeze of the trigger. But all that has changed.

With Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror, Gabe is back doing what he does best - killing loads and loads of people. He's had a few years off but his blood still runs red, white and blue, his mobile phone still plays 'The Star-Spangled Banner' and presumably the stars and stripes still adorn his undies. But he's not interested in dying for his country. He's here to make the other guys die for their country.

Dark Mirror's story is a paint by numbers affair - the good guys still need to kill the bad guys with a lethal combination of hightech weaponry and Arnie-esque one-liners. The action isn't particularly revolutionary either. But Dark Mirror is much better than the sum of its parts.

The first thing you'll notice is just how easily and intuitively it controls. The interface is simple and functional, but the amount of

features and moves that have been mapped to it is astonishing. Before too long you'll be hugging walls, firing from cover, breaking necks, equipping all manner of snazzy goggles, barbequing baddies from 30 feet away with your trusty taser and zip lining without the least bit of confusion. It can get a little fussy when you want to flick a switch but wind up with your back against it, but overall it works like a charm. Dark Mirror Isn't a half-arsed port of an existing title - it was built from the ground up and fully optimised for PSP, and it shows.

A mix of gung-ho, balls-first action and silent sneakiness, Dark Mirror does well to make sure your brain is just as important as your bullet supply. It's all pretty familiar if you've played an action game in the past say, 12 years, but it does it with such style and aplomb it's barely an issue. Each mission is well suited to on-the-go play too with liberal checkpoints and very little backtracking.

Visually it's equally as impressive - both the characters and environments are packed with detail, and the animations are silky smooth. The sound is top notch too with suitably gruff voice acting and a score from The X-Files composer Mark Fox propelling you headfirst through the action.

With an awesome multiplayer mode completing the package, there's really very little actually wrong with Dark Mirror. A superslick, Hollywood-style action extravaganza, THIS is the Syphon Filter we remember - don't miss it. - Luke Reilly

MULTIPLAYER MAYHEM

Dark Mirror easily has one of the best multiplayer packages of any PSP game, making use of both the PSP's Ad-Hoc (WI-FI) and infrastructure (online) canabilities. You can leap into a number of eight-player games including Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, Objective and Rogue Agent modes.
The Objective matches, where teams compete to accomplish a common goal, work quite well. In one you need to work together to defuse a bomb in the middle of a map that's protected by a number of laser tripwires – better watch your step!



X OFFICIAL VERDICT 10 Awesome presentation & detail 09 GAMEPLAY Lengthy for solo and multi-play LIFESPAN Fast-paced, balls-out, hard-hitting action

- the best of its kind

on PSP by far.

Make another one. Now

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

Pretty much everything

LAB TEST

Syphon Filter: The Omega Strain

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

BETTER THAN

WORSE THAN



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Terms and conditions apply. Competition ends August 31st 2006

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PSP Magazine









JUICED: ELIMINATOR

Juiced squeezed into your pocket

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ
DEVELOPER: JUICED GAMES PRICE: \$69.95 PLAYERS: 1-6 (WI-FI) OUT: JULY WEB: www.thq.com

n the scheme of street racing, Juiced wasn't as flashy as Midnight Club 3, it was a little more cramped than Need for Speed Underground 2 and it had the WORST name filter ever (Michelle was an 'illegal name' for your profile because it has the word 'hell' in it), but it did feature some hectic visuals and a stack of slick supercars. How did it survive the move to PSP?

Well it doesn't quite have the cajoles to muscle Midnight Club 3 from the top of the podium, but it's arguably a more satisfying racer than both NFS Rivals and Most Wanted 5-1-0. Retaining all that was good about the PS2 version, like the team racing, Aussie cars and the ability to bet on races to make extra cash, Eliminator adds two new locations with eight tracks apiece, nine new rides

and over 100 new body-kit options.

Career mode is business as usual - buy a ride, trick it out, win some cash, buy a faster one. Arcade mode is somewhat different - it's a series of challenges ranging from regular circuit races, speed challenges and Eliminator races. Completing these will unlock new cars and tracks to use In Custom Race mode. Eliminator also supports up to six players wirelessly - keep a firm hold of your pink slip!

Juiced: Eliminator is really not that different from its PS2 ancestor, although the minor tweaks like removing the misleading 'Slow Down' and 'Brake Now!' warnings that flashed up as you raced haven't gone unnoticed.

Just a word of warning though - there's still no Michelles allowed. - Luke Reilly

× OFFICIAL VERDICT

LIFESPAN

A little bland, but not too shabby

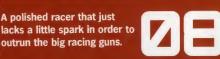
Hit and miss soundtrack, good effects Robust, although a little repetitive

Challenges galore, decent multiplayer

A polished racer that just

outrun the big racing guns.

Juiced 'legal' names: Aryan, Osama, testicle, bomb.











X ACTION/ADVENTURE

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHES'

Looking for some booty?

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ DEVELOPER: AMAZE ENTERTAINMENT PRICE: \$79.95 PLAYERS: 1-4 (WI-FI) OUT: JULY WEB: www.disney.go.com/buenavistagames/pirates/

ho wouldn't relish the life of a pirate? What's not to love? Hanging with your boys, pillaging and plundering, drinking, brawling, wenching, stealing what you can, giving nothing back, it all kinda sounds like the OPS2 crew on a Saturday night. The swashbuckling adventures of pirates have always had appeal, those scoundrels of the open seas. And no one epitomises piracy more, with all its flair and gusto than it's poster boy, the legendary Jack Sparrow... sorry, that's the legendary Captain Jack Sparrow. Sawy?

In Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest you'll get to carve your way through pirate scum, monsters of the deep and any other scurvy-ridden dogs that cross your path, as you attempt to recover, as the title

suggests "the Dead Man's Chest". Playing as Jack, what Immediately surprised us was the combat. When you engage them, each enemy has a button over their head prompting you to hit ⊗,⊚ or ⊚. it's very similar to the mini-games to quick-kill a cyclops or a minotaur in God of War. Your attacks vary dependant on the weapons your adversary has. When you launch a series of powerful strikes, you'll notice your foe's sword shatters a split-second before you run him through with yours, which is pretty cool.

This is about as close as you can get to reliving the movie. Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest gives you all the hard and fast action you could want, with a lovable rogue's style and panache. & Dave Kozicki

X OFFICIAL VERDICT **∅⊆** Captures Jack's mannerisms perfectly It's gold Button-mashingly easy ☑目 Bonus ship-based multiplayer LIFESPAN Treasure like this doesn't deserve to stay buried. Dig it up!





TALKMAN

Don't get lost in translation...

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: SONY ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: NOW

t's happened to everyone at one time or another. You're In another country, you're in a nightclub and you're trying to ask a Jessica Alba wannabe back to your hotel room. Unfortunately you don't speak the local lingo. Worry no more, as Talkman will teach you how to speak Japanese, English, Spanish, French, Italian or German through voice activated games. Using the supplied USB microphone, you practice phrases and are graded by your instructor Max, who bears more than a striking resemblance to the mascot from 'Dodo' internet (we smell a lawsuit). Not only does it tutor you, but in Talk Mode you can select a situation like a nightclub, or

taxi hiring and Max brings up the relevant phrases to guide you. With *Talkman*, getting your mac on all over the world has never been so easy. **A. DK**







X RPG

UNTOLD LEGENDS: THE WARRIOR'S CODE

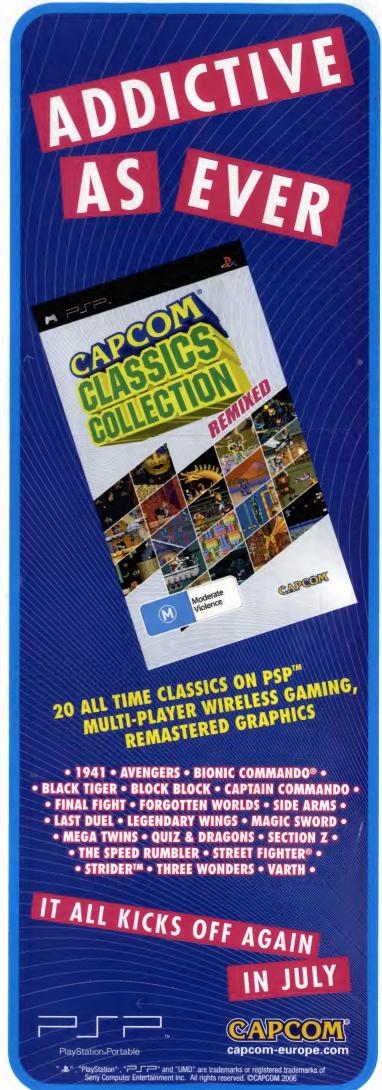
Like The Da Vinci Code, only more stabby

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY \blacksquare DEVELOPER: SONY \blacksquare PRICE: \$79.95 \blacksquare PLAYERS: 1 (1-4 WIF1) \blacksquare OUT: NOW

PGs have come a long way.
Gone are the days of plodding
along through endless random
battles of turn based combat,
generating about as much excitement and
anticipation as a 18 holes of golf with your
85 year old, wheelchair-bound Grandpa. By
comparison, modern RPGs are more like
a swift game of Putt-Putt, Happy Gilmore
style. More and more are looking like third
person actioners, with RPG elements.
Untold Legends: The Warriors Code is
cut from that mould. Impressive graphics,
challenging boss battles, a steady learning
curve coupled with a surprisingly deep

weapons and magic upgrading system have elevated *UL:TWC* to the lofty heights of best action RPG on the PSP. ♣ DK





PSP Magazine





X SPORTS

WORLD TOUR SOCCER 2

Not as polished as the real cup

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: SONY ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ OUT: NOW

orld Cup fever is still running hot throughout the country and what better cure than a game of soccer in the palm of your hand.

World Tour Soccer 2 offers something a little different compared to the other football games on the PSP shelves. There is a season mode but the main event is the Medal Mode that sets you a bunch of challenges. One challenge we tackled required us to pass the ball to every single player on the team before scoring the goal. The mode really puts your soccer skills to the test

It's not quite as tight as Pro Evo and FIFA but it offers a unique spin on the soccer sim that's well worth putting the boot into. & PF







ASTONISHIA STORY

Astonishinaly dull...

DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT ■ DEVELOPER: SONNORI ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: NOW

e have no problem with old school 2D RPGs, they were certainly a force in console gaming in the early nineties and we're as nostalgic as the next bunch of veteran gamers. We do however have a problem with generic gameplay, disenchanting characters and uninspired storytelling. Thus, we have a problem with Astonishia Story.

The game is actually a port of a Korean title released more than a decade ago, but it's not a patch on its 2D contemporaries, such as the likes of the early Final Fantasy games and Chrono Trigger, and nothing has been

added to it in the remake to make It worth your while. If 2D RPGs are your bag, save yourself the pain and get Tales of Eternia instead. 4 TO







X BEAT 'EM UP

VIEWTIFUL JOE: RED HOT RUMBLE

Lukewarm biffo?

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: CAPCOM ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 (Wi-Fi) ■ OUT: NOW

he original Viewtiful Joe's celshaded wackiness made for compelling gaming, especially considering that other than the half-hearted Force Mode in Tekken, it was the only option for PS2-owning fans of scrolling beat 'em ups. Two sequels later, Red Hot Rumble lacks the original's freshness and simply feels rushed.

It's not only the lack of significant additions that makes it feel rushed. The game itself rushes the player through each stage by making them compete against an on-screen CPU opponent to see who can bag the most baddies before the time limit runs out. The multiplayer

game-share is a welcome feature but Red Hot Rumble simply fails to stack up against many of the more polished PSP titles of recent months. & NP



swift to be enjoyable





MICRO MACHINES V4

The pocket racers go pocket-sized

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI DEVELOPER: SUPERSONIC PRICE: \$69.95 PLAYERS: 1-4 (WI-FI) OUT: JULY

icro Machines V4 is essentially Identical to the PS2 version, reviewed on page 76. Seeing as though you've probably already read about the ups and downs of Micro Machines V4 in the PS2 review, we're not going to repeat ourselves here.

However, there are a couple of things worth mentioning. It doesn't feature the track editor from the PS2 version but It does boast Wi-Fi support for up to four players. You can even decide to play for keeps, so if you lose the race you lose your car. Also, if you can't round up enough PSP owning mates two people can use a single PSP by holding each

end (but the buttons will do your head in and that's assuming you haven't already got a concussion from head butting your pal). Great racing fun. 4 LR





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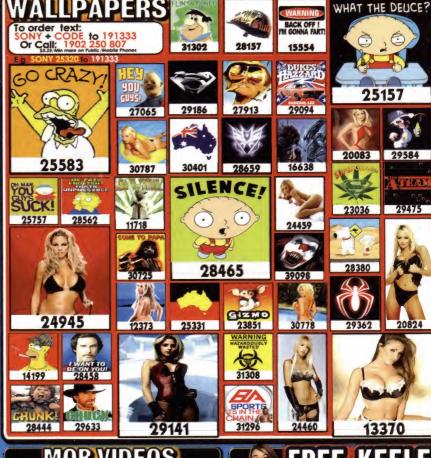
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